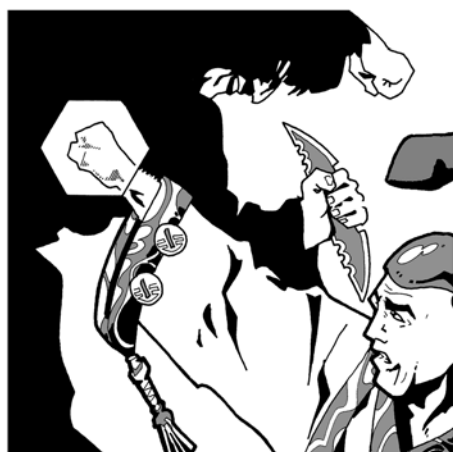


**GURPS®**

Fourth Edition

# ***ACTION<sup>TM</sup> 3***

## ***FURIOUS FISTS<sup>TM</sup>***



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*Jake, why don't you take your fists of fury  
outside. You're making the poor man  
nervous.*

*– Mace Ryan, **Rapid Fire***

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# INTRODUCTION

Action movies have a love affair with hand-to-hand mayhem. Want to underline how tough the hero is? Set aside the high-tech equalizers – guns, cars, spy gizmos, etc. – and have the good guy square off against the villain in single combat. Better yet, have him defeat gun-waving mooks using only a sword, a stick, or his bare hands.

Two words leap to mind here: *martial arts*. Of course, not everyone who can throw a punch or use a melee weapon is a martial artist. Nearly every template in **GURPS Action 1: Heroes** includes basic roughhousing skills: the lifesaving medic can restrain unruly patients, and might even wield his scalpel in anger; the geeky wire rat still receives basic hand-to-hand training; and so on. Only the hacker lacks such chops. But the true martial artist *focuses* on punches and kicks, on nunchaku and ninja stars – that's his primary role on the squad!

Likewise, not every martial-arts film is an action movie. Many are historical costume pieces, while **Action** makes its home in the world of jets, the Internet, and full-automatic weapons. *Good* martial-arts cinema often minimizes escapades like those in **GURPS Action 2: Exploits**, preferring instead to tell a master or style's tale, and focusing mainly on aesthetics, technical accuracy, and/or the heroes' philosophy. **Action** concerns itself with just the fighting!

Thus, **GURPS Action 3: Furious Fists** cuts to the chase and offers rules for creating and playing martial-artist PCs with a straightforward role: Defeat bad guys in situations where guns are forbidden, too noisy, or flat-out uncool, and kick the butt of rival martial artists.

Be aware that **Furious Fists** expands the character-creation guidelines in **Heroes** and is meant to be used alongside them.

It also assumes a campaign that uses the cinematic combat rules found in **Exploits**. **GURPS Martial Arts** isn't required reading, however; **Furious Fists** includes all the necessary content in simplified, rules-light form. Still, if you enjoy **Furious Fists**, you'll want **Martial Arts** eventually.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sean "Dr. Kromm" Punch set out to become a particle physicist in 1985, ended up the **GURPS** Line Editor in 1995, and has engineered rules for almost every **GURPS** product since. He developed, edited, or wrote dozens of **GURPS Third Edition** projects between 1995 and 2002. In 2004, he produced the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition** with David Pulver. Since then, he has created **GURPS Powers** (with Phil Masters), **GURPS Martial Arts** (with Peter Dell'Orto), and the **GURPS Action**, **GURPS Dungeon Fantasy**, and **GURPS Power-Ups** series . . . and the list keeps growing.

Sean has been a gamer since 1979. His non-gaming interests include cinema, cooking, and wine. He lives in Montréal, Québec with his wife, Bonnie. They have two cats, Banshee and Zephyra, and a noisy parrot, Circe.

## About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of **GURPS** players. Our address is SJ Games, P.O. Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! We can also be reached by e-mail: [info@sjgames.com](mailto:info@sjgames.com). Resources include:

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**Bibliographies.** Many of our books have extensive bibliographies, and we're putting them online – with links to let you buy the books that interest you! Go to the book's web page and look for the "Bibliography" link.

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the **GURPS Basic Set, Fourth Edition**. Page references that begin with B refer to that book, not this one.

# CHAPTER ONE

# MARTIAL-ARTIST TEMPLATES

These templates work *exactly* like those on pp. 7-16 of **Heroes**: pay the point cost, pick any options left open, and write down the abilities this gives. Then customize your PC

further by spending the extra points earned by taking up to five quirks. See also *How to Use Character Templates* (p. B258).

## LENSES

Like other action heroes, a martial artist must select a 20-point background lens. The *criminal*, *intelligence*, *law enforcement*, *military*, and *security* options on pp. 4-5 of **Heroes** remain valid. Given the emphasis on hand-to-hand capabilities in the templates of **Furious Fists**, though, it's wise to spread your 20 points among as many *noncombat* lens skills as possible. That'll give you something to do when there's nobody to hit!

Specific notes:

**Criminal**: Crooked martial artists have enough training that Brawling is rarely worth the points. Guns, meanwhile, runs somewhat counter to being a dedicated martial artist. Apart from Streetwise, then, consider Forced Entry for throwing mighty karate kicks at doors, Holdout for stashing exotic weapons, Intimidation for ending fights before they begin by showing off fancy moves, and Stealth for getting the drop on better-armed foes.

**Intelligence**: Spy missions regularly feature long stretches with little fighting, so don't ignore "technical" espionage skills; e.g., Cryptography, Forgery, Intelligence Analysis, Interrogation, Photography, and Propaganda. Your bosses probably value your martial-arts training for its silence and invisibility to security sensors, so *sneaky* skills – such as Holdout, Shadowing, and Stealth – are also fitting.

**Law Enforcement**: To avoid being simply a thug with a badge, select enough lawman skills to pull your weight during an investigation – and if you're playing true to martial-artist type, this *doesn't* mean "Guns, Guns, and more Guns." Several of Criminology, Forensics, Interrogation, Observation, Savoir-Faire (Police), Search, and Streetwise can help you operate like a reasonably competent cop.

**Military**: In addition to Soldier, a martial artist who could pass basic training ought to know Camouflage, Guns (Rifle), and Hiking, at least. As well, officers will want some of Leadership, Savoir-Faire (Military), Strategy, and Tactics. Additional firearms training is likely – however cinematic the game and

however much the hero avoids guns, a soldier *does* need to know how to handle military weapons.

**Security**: Professional counterspies should focus on investigative skills that enable them to find terrorists and foreign agents to karate-chop. These include Body Language, Criminology, Intelligence Analysis, Interrogation, Observation, and Search. Bodyguards will find unarmed skills valuable, but note that protection-detail personnel *have* to know Guns, Fast-Draw, and Holdout for concealed handguns.

**Other Lenses**: The suggestions under *No Lens?* (**Heroes**, p. 5) fit martial artists, too. *Athlete* and *rich adventurer* are common, and *martial-arts master* is especially apt. When using **Furious Fists**, those who pick the latter should invest their 20 points in additional perks, cinematic skills, and techniques from their template. Finally, the following lens is expressly for martial artists.

*Miss O'Neil, teaching them the  
ancient art of Ninjitsu was hard enough.  
I'm afraid even I cannot work miracles.*

– Splinter, **Teenage Mutant  
Ninja Turtles**

### New Lens: Wise Master

20 points

You're a cerebral martial artist, such as an ancient master or a cunning tactician. This lens lacks the formality of other lenses. Simply spend 20 points on any combination of IQ +1 [20], Will +1 to +4 [5/level], Per +1 to +4 [5/level], Strong Chi 1-4 [5/level], or your template's IQ-, Will-, or Per-based skills (only).

## Campaign Types

Some notes on adjusting the standard campaign types (*Heroes*, pp. 5-6) to accommodate martial artists:

*Brotherhood in Blue*: Any martial-artist template *might* work; just add the law enforcement or security lens. However, chasing scumbags through city streets is classic cop action, so traceurs fit particularly well. Ninjas and weapon masters border on inappropriate – few detectives have leave to behead suspects with a katana!

*Caper*: The GM can *make* martial artists vital to elaborate capers by including a heavy obstacle for the big guy, a high wall for the traceur, and so on. As most crews avoid noise and murder, unarmed combat skills are valuable. The criminal lens remains appropriate – but masterminds employ specialists, and the athlete lens better suits those whose specialty is strength or speed.

*Commandos*: Modern battlefield weaponry makes it difficult to keep hand-to-hand fighters alive, even in over-the-top campaigns. At minimum, the GM should *require* the military lens and encourage players to choose the big guy (tough enough to survive), ninja (sneaky enough to avoid harm), or weapon master (melee weapons are better than nothing!).

*Mercs*: If the campaign is genuinely military, the notes for commandos apply. If civilian, see the advice for caper and troubleshooters campaigns.

*Spy vs. Spy*: Martial-artist agents should have the intelligence or security lens. The ninja *is* a spy, and fits best –

but weapon masters with sword canes have been around since the 1960s, traceurs are the latest craze, and the big guy and fast guy offer suitably *sneaky* muscle.

*Task Force*: Any martial artist with the intelligence, law enforcement, military, or security lens could work. Otherwise, the advice for the caper campaign holds: The GM should confront the task force with obstacles that *require* the traceur, ninja, etc.

*Troubleshooters*: The fact that martial artists don't wield guns makes them useful to private operators who lack legal authority and don't want the attention of people who have it. A team assembled by professionals will want a martial artist who's a career expert, making the athlete and martial-arts master lenses most suitable.

*Vigilante Justice*: Action tales are full of martial artists who deal street justice. The usual lenses – notably law enforcement – *could* work, but in movies, heroes with the martial-arts master and wise master lenses regularly seek revenge on scum, while those with the rich adventurer lens battle crime using costly toys and equally expensive martial-arts lessons.

*War Against Terror*: Hand-to-hand combat is no match for high-tech weapons wielded by killers who fight dirty. Martial artists should have the law enforcement, military, or security lens, and load up on Guns skills. The ninja and traceur have the greatest odds of being useful.

## TEMPLATES

### BIG GUY

250 points

*Time to separate the men from the boys.*

– Ray Jackson, *Bloodsport*

You're a master of barehanded combat – but not the sort who jumps readily to mind. In fact, you prefer *not* to jump, and favor physical strength and grit over acrobatics. This doesn't mean that you lack finesse; you simply like to settle scraps with solid hits, not by dancing around. As far as you're concerned, leaping is a way to exit moving vehicles and second-story windows . . . and in those situations, you're tough enough to take the fall!

**Attributes**: ST 15 [50]; DX 13 [60]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 14 [40].

**Secondary Characteristics**: Damage 1d+1/2d+1; BL 45 lbs.; HP 15 [0]; Will 11 [5]; Per 10 [0]; FP 14 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [5]; Basic Move 7 [0].

**Advantages**: DR 1 (Limited, Crushing, -40%) [3]; Luck [15]; and Trained by a Master [30]. ● A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (p. 4 and *Heroes*, pp. 4-5), additional martial-arts abilities, ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], HP +1 to +5 [2/level], Will +1 to +6 [5/level], FP +1 to +5 [3/level], Arm ST 1-2 [5/level], Combat Reflexes [15], Daredevil [15], Enhanced Parry 1-3 (Bare

Hands) [5/level], Fearlessness [2/level], Fit [5] or Very Fit [15], Hard to Kill 1-2 [2/level], Hard to Subdue 1-2 [2/level], High Pain Threshold [10], Lifting ST 1-2 [3/level], Rapid Healing [5] or Very Rapid Healing [15], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Striker (Crushing; Shin, -20%) [4], Striking ST 1-2 [5/level], Strong Chi 1-4 [5/level], Wild Talent 1 [20], raise DR to DR 2 (Limited, Crushing, -40%) [6] for 3 points, or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages**: -20 points chosen from among Compulsive Behavior (Brawling) [-10\*], Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; Extremely Hazardous; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-10, -15, or -20], Obsession (Beat a specific rival or win a certain tournament) [-5\*], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], or Vow (Always fight unarmed) [-15]. ● Another -15 points chosen from among those traits or Bad Temper [-10\*], Berserk [-10\*], Bloodlust [-10\*], Bully [-10\*], Callous [-5], Honesty [-10\*], Impulsiveness [-10\*], On the Edge [-15\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], Pacifism (Cannot Harm Innocents) [-10], or Stubbornness [-5]. ● A further -15 points chosen from either of the previous lists or Basic Move -1 or -2 [-5/level], Alcoholism [-15], Appearance (Unattractive or Ugly) [-4 or -8], Chummy [-5] or Loner [-5\*], Gluttony [-5\*], Ham-Fisted 1-2 [-5/level], Odious Personal Habits [-5 to -15], Overweight [-1] or Fat [-3], or Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5].

**Primary Skills:** A total of 16 points in some combination of Brawling (E) DX+2 [4]-15; Boxing, Sumo Wrestling, or Wrestling, all (A) DX+1 [4]-14; Judo or Karate, both (H) DX [4]-13; or 4 points/level to raise any of these by up to three levels.

**Secondary Skills:** Five of Fast-Draw (Knife or Pistol), Forced Entry, Garrote, Guns (Pistol or Shotgun), Jumping, or Knife, all (E) DX+1 [2]-14; Axe/Mace, Broadsword, Shortsword, Staff, Stealth, or Two-Handed Axe/Mace, all (A) DX [2]-13; Acrobatics or Flail, both (H) DX-1 [2]-12; Acting, Leadership, or Streetwise, all (A) IQ [2]-10; Carousing or Swimming, both (E) HT+1 [2]-15; Lifting (A) HT [2]-14; Intimidation (A) Will [2]-11; Scrounging (E) Per+1 [2]-11; Urban Survival (A) Per [2]-10; or 2 points to raise one of those skills by a level.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (p. 4 and *Heroes*, pp. 4-5). • Driving (Automobile, Heavy Wheeled, or Motorcycle) (A) DX-1 [1]-12.

**Martial-Arts Abilities:** A total of 15 points in any of the perks, cinematic skills, and techniques below. Where several specialties exist, choose *unarmed* ones.

**Perks:** Cowpoker [1]; Deadly Pose [1]; Dirty Fighting 1-3 [1/level]; Finishing Move [1]; Focused Fury [1]; Iron Hands [1]; or Trademark Move [1].

**Cinematic Skills:** Immovable Stance or Push, both (H) DX-2 [1]-11; Kiai (H) HT-2 [1]-12; or Power Blow (H) Will-2 [1]-9. Spending a total of 2 points in any skill buys it at one level higher, a total of 4 points purchases it at two levels higher, and cost is 4 points/level after that.

**Techniques:** Arm Lock [1 to 4]; Choke Hold [2 or 3]; Disarming [2 to 6]; Dual-Weapon Attack [2 to 5]; Elbow Drop [2 to 5]; Elbow Strike [1 or 2]; Feint [2 to 5]; Ground Fighting [2 to 5]; Kicking [2 or 3]; Knee Strike [1]; Leg Lock [1 to 4]; Neck Snap [2 to 8]; Piledriver [2 to 6]; Proxy Fighting [2 to 5]; Roll with Blow [2 or 3]; Stamp Kick [2 to 4]; Sweeping Kick [2 to 4]; Uppercut [1]; or Wrench (Limb) [2 to 8].

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

*This walking mountain of  
muscle is called Sagat.*

– Chun-Li, *Sutorîto  
Faitâ II gekijô-ban*

### Customization Notes

The two major big-guy archetypes demand careful choices of mental disadvantages. The “gentle giant” has several of Chummy, Honesty, Pacifism, Sense of Duty, and Vow. The “thug” has flaws like Alcoholism, Bad Temper, Bloodlust, Bully, Callous, Odious Personal Habits, and Social Stigma. Overconfidence suits both, but isn’t quite universal.

Then decide *how* you fight:

**Mixed Martial Artist:** Some MMA bouts are contests of technique and precision, but you focus on *power*. To borrow from Brazilian Jiu-jitsu and Muay Thai, take Karate and add Judo or Wrestling – possibly both. Buy your shins as a Striker, too!

Additional skills should be athletic: Jumping, Lifting, Swimming, etc. The Focused Fury perk is good for knockouts; common techniques are Neck Snap, Ground Fighting, and Wrench (Limb); and Immovable Stance and Push let *you* decide when the ground fight starts.

**Rassler:** High kicking is for sissies! You prefer body slams and elbow drops. More ST – basic, Arm, Lifting, and/or Striking – is a priority. Wrestling is your key skill, but don’t overlook Brawling. Acting (to feign injury), Intimidation, and Jumping (from the top rope) are also useful. Be sure to select a showy Finishing Move or Trademark Move perk; improve some of Elbow Drop, Neck Snap, Piledriver, and Stamp Kick; and get Power Blow or Push for chucking opponents around.

**Sluggo:** You’re a heavyweight who relies on his fists. You’ll definitely want Arm ST and possibly Striking ST, alongside the HP and DR to eat punches. Boxing hurts more than Brawling, but the latter includes kicks – choose wisely. Round this out with an athletic skill or two; e.g., Lifting and Swimming. A fitting perk is Iron Hands; techniques run to Dual-Weapon Attack (“the old one-two”), Roll with Blow, and Uppercut; and use Power Blow to throw fight-finishers.

**Streetfighter:** You’re a hardened biker or bouncer. You fight dirty – which includes using weapons, often improvised ones. Your *enemies* do, too, so consider improving DR. Start with Brawling and Wrestling, and add Intimidation, Scrounging, Streetwise, Urban Survival, and a Melee Weapon skill. All three levels of the Dirty Fighting perk are nearly a must, and Cowpoker is common; classic techniques are Knee Strike, Proxy Fighting (for launching scenery!), and Stamp Kick; and a fitting cinematic skill is Power Blow.

**Sumotori:** Size is your weapon! A sumo wrestler needs high HP for slams, plus the Overweight or Fat disadvantage – likely with Gluttony. The core skill is Sumo Wrestling (allows accurate and powerful slams), but Brawling is a good finisher; Carousing suits the stereotype, and Swimming enjoys a bonus when you’re fat. Focused Fury can make slams irresistible; Feint and Sweeping Kick are key techniques; and Immovable Stance, Kiai, and Push are all excellent cinematic skills. Movie sumotori are often traditionalists, and know Hobby Skill (Flower-Arranging or Origami) (IQ/E), Cooking (IQ/A), or Artist (Calligraphy) (IQ/H), bought with points from quirks like “Surprisingly delicate.”

## FAST GUY

250 points

*Murata:* You know all of that upper body strength really slows you down.

*Kenner:* I’m not slow.

*Murata:* You didn’t hit me.

*Kenner:* If I did, you wouldn’t be here.

*Murata:* Not arguing. But you didn’t . . .

– *Showdown in Little Tokyo*

You’re what most people think of as a “martial artist”: lean, agile, and lethally skilled at unarmed combat. In the world of *Action*, this makes you the closest thing to a *wuxia* or *chambara* star. You can’t *quite* break the laws of physics, but you’re working on it! Until you succeed, you satisfy yourself with breaking boards, bricks, and records. You perform feats at the edge of human capability with ease – frequently to the surprise of friend and foe alike.

**Attributes:** ST 11 [10]; DX 16 [120]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 12 [20].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 10 [0]; Per 10 [0]; FP 12 [0]; Basic Speed 8.00 [20]; Basic Move 8 [0].

**Advantages:** Luck [15] and Trained by a Master [30]. • A further 25 points chosen from among lens advantages (p. 4 and *Heroes*, pp. 4-5), additional martial-arts abilities, ST +1 or +2 [10/level], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 or +2 [10/level], HP +1 to +3 [2/level], Will +1 to +5 [5/level], Per +1 to +5 [5/level], FP +1 to +3 [3/level], Basic Speed +1 [20], Basic Move +1 to +3 [5/level], Attractive [4], Blunt Claws [3], Combat Reflexes [15], Daredevil [15], Enhanced Dodge 1 [15], Enhanced Parry 1-3 (Bare Hands) [5/level], Extra Attack 1 [25], Fit [5] or Very Fit [15], Flexibility [5] or Double-Jointed [15], Hard to Kill 1-4 [2/level], Hard to Subdue 1-4 [2/level], High Pain Threshold [10], Perfect Balance [15], Serendipity 1 [15], Striker (Crushing; Shin, -20%) [4], Striking ST 1-2 [5/level], Strong Chi 1-4 [5/level], Wild Talent 1 [20], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** -20 points chosen from among Compulsive Behavior (Thrill-seeking) [-5\*], Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; Extremely Hazardous; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-10, -15, or -20], Obsession (Beat a specific rival or win a certain tournament) [-5\*], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], or Vow (Always fight unarmed) [-15]. • Another -15 points chosen from among those traits or Bad Temper [-10\*], Bloodlust [-10\*], Callous [-5], Code of Honor ("Fight fair!") [-5], Delusion ("Skill always beats strength!") [-5], Honesty [-10\*], Impulsiveness [-10\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], or Pacifism (Cannot Harm Innocents) [-10]. • A further -15 points chosen from either of the previous lists or HP -1 to -3 [-2/level], Chummy [-5] or Loner [-5\*], Jealousy [-10], Skinny [-5], Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5], Stubbornness [-5], Trickster [-15\*], or Workaholic [-5].

**Primary Skills:** A total of 16 points in some combination of Boxing or Wrestling, both (A) DX+1 [4]-17; or Judo or Karate, both (H) DX [4]-16; or 4 points/level to raise any of these by up to three levels.

**Secondary Skills:** Acrobatics (H) DX-2 [1]-14; Jumping (E) DX [1]-16; and Stealth (A) DX-1 [1]-15. • Five of Fast-Draw (any), Forced Entry, Garrote, Guns (Pistol), or Knife, all (E) DX [1]-16; Climbing, Dancing, Jitte/Sai, Shortsword, Staff, Throwing, or Tonfa, all (A) DX-1 [1]-15; Escape, Flail, Kusari, or Sleight of Hand, all (H) DX-2 [1]-14; Carousing or Swimming, both (E) HT [1]-12; Running or Sex Appeal, both (A) HT-1 [1]-11; Intimidation (A) Will-1 [1]-9; or 1 point to raise any secondary skill by a level.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (p. 4 and *Heroes*, pp. 4-5). • Driving (Automobile or Motorcycle) (A) DX-1 [1]-15.

**Martial-Arts Abilities:** A total of 15 points in any of the perks, cinematic skills, and techniques below. Where several specialties exist, choose *unarmed* ones.

**Perks:** Acrobatic Feints [1]; Acrobatic Kicks [1]; Cowpoker [1]; Dirty Fighting 1-3 [1/level]; Finishing Move [1]; Focused Fury [1]; High-Heeled Heroine [1]; High-Heeled Hurt [1]; Iron Hands [1]; or Trademark Move [1].

**Cinematic Skills:** Breaking Blow, Flying Leap (requires Power Blow), or Pressure Points, all (H) IQ-2 [1]-8; Pressure Secrets (requires Pressure Points at 16+) (VH) IQ-3 [1]-7;

Immovable Stance or Push, both (H) DX-2 [1]-14; Kiai (H) HT-2 [1]-10; or Power Blow (H) Will-2 [1]-8. Spending a total of 2 points in any skill buys it at one level higher; a total of 4 points purchases it at two levels higher; and cost is 4 points/level after that.

**Techniques:** Acrobatic Stand [1 to 6]; Arm Lock [1 to 4]; Back Kick [2 to 5]; Choke Hold [2 or 3]; Disarming [2 to 6]; Dual-Weapon Attack [2 to 5]; Elbow Strike [1 or 2]; Evade [1 to 5]; Feint [2 to 5]; Flying Jump Kick [2 to 8]; Ground Fighting [2 to 5]; Jump Kick [2 to 5]; Kicking [2 or 3]; Knee Strike [1]; Leg Lock [1 to 4]; Lethal Kick [2 to 5]; Lethal Strike [2 or 3]; Proxy Fighting [2 to 5]; Roll with Blow [2 or 3]; Running Climb [2 to 7]; Spinning [1 or 2]; Spinning Kick [2 to 4]; Spinning Punch [2 or 3]; Stamp Kick [2 to 4]; Sweeping Kick [2 to 4]; or Uppercut [1].

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.



## Customization Notes

Classic fast-guy archetypes include "hard-working jock" (choose Code of Honor, Obsession, Stubbornness, and/or Workaholic), "hothead" (with several of Bad Temper, Bloodlust, Impulsiveness, and Obsession), "kid with heart" (select a few of Chummy, Honesty, Pacifism, and Sense of Duty), and "showoff" (look at Compulsive Behavior, Delusion, Jealousy, and Trickster). Overconfidence always fits!

You'll also need a *style* of fighting:

**Acrobat:** You're adept at Capoeira, Savate, Wushu, or the like, and dazzle rivals with spins and leaping kicks. You'll want higher DX, Enhanced Dodge, or Perfect Balance. Pick Karate as your fighting skill, boost Acrobatics and Jumping, and consider Dancing and Running. If you buy Acrobatic Feints and Acrobatic Kicks, feel free to swap Karate and Acrobatics! Key techniques are Acrobatic Stand, Evade, Flying Jump Kick, Spinning, and Spinning Kick. The consummate cinematic skill is Flying Leap.

*By the time your guys are firing, I'll be at about 180 on my reverse inverted 360, which will land me on Fat Boy there, as promised.*

– Dylan, *Charlie's Angels* (2000)

**Boxer:** You're a master of the lightning punch. Efficiency is paramount – you only throw big, exhausting hits when they'll be decisive. Raise Basic Move and get Enhanced Dodge to aid your footwork. Your core unarmed skill is Boxing, while logical supporting skills are athletic: Running, Swimming, etc. Feint is your most prized technique. Get the Focused Fury perk, Uppercut technique, and Power Blow skill to turn on the power when necessary.

**Bruce Lee:** You may favor Karate or Shaolin over Jeet Kune Do, but like Bruce, you use your whole body – and mind – in a fight. This role benefits greatly from cinematic skills, so Strong Chi is handy. The basics are Judo and Karate, plus Melee Weapon skills for exotic weaponry. Any perk, technique, or cinematic skill is fair game. Action movies are full of heroes who've honed one of Elbow Strike, Kicking, Knee Strike, Lethal Kick, or Lethal Strike to perfection, and heroines who deliver High-Heeled Hurt.

**Mister Pain:** Size matters not! You use your foe's strength against him, traditionally through the secrets of Aikido or Jujutsu. Extra ST doesn't hurt, though, and Flexibility is good for escaping beefier grapplers. Judo is your prime skill; helpful accompaniments are Escape, and more Acrobatics and Stealth, for weaseling into and out of "situations." Dirty Fighting is the customary perk; Arm Lock, Choke Hold, and Evade are all useful techniques; and Immovable Stance, Pressure Points, and Push are ideal cinematic skills.

**Mixed Martial Artist:** Some MMA bouts are crude contests of power, but you focus on *technique* and *precision*. To reflect Brazilian Jiu-jitsu and Muay Thai, start with Karate and add Judo and/or Wrestling. Also buy your shins as a Striker! Supplemental skills should be athletic: Running, Swimming, etc. The fast guy often has a Trademark Move perk for his finishing move; vital techniques are Arm Lock, Choke Hold, and Ground Fighting; and Immovable Stance and Push can compensate for low ST.

## NINJA

250 points

*It can't be . . . all the Ninja are dead . . .*

– Scott James, *The Octagon*

Hooded, black-clad, armed with an arsenal of deadly weapons, and able to come and go undetected, you are *ninja*. In many ways, you're an assassin (*Heroes*, p. 7) without the rifle. Your methods date to an earlier era, though, and are often seen as "impossible" by modern-day folks – a misperception you encourage. Note that being a ninja doesn't make you a murderous bad guy; some ninjas are killers for hire, but just as many serve only the most honorable causes.

**Attributes:** ST 11 [10]; DX 15 [100]; IQ 11 [20]; HT 11 [10].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-1/1d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 11 [0]; Per 11 [0]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [10]; Basic Move 7 [0].

**Advantages:** Craftiness 2 [10]; Luck [15]; and Weapon Master (Ninja Weapons) [35]. ● A further 25 points chosen from among lens advantages (p. 4 and *Heroes*, pp. 4-5), additional martial-arts abilities, ST +1 or +2 [10 or 20], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 or +2 [10 or 20], Per +1 to +5 [5/level], Basic Speed +1 [20], Basic Move +1 to +3 [5/level], Acute Senses (any) [2/level], Ambidexterity [5], Combat Reflexes [15], Craftiness 3 or 4 [5/level], Danger Sense [15], Daredevil [15], Enhanced Dodge 1 [15], Enhanced Parry 1-2 (All) [10/level], Enhanced Parry 1-3 (One melee weapon) [5/level], Extra Attack 1 [25], Gizmos 1-3 [5/gizmo], Night Vision 1-9 [1/level], Perfect Balance [15], Peripheral Vision [15], Serendipity 1 [15], Signature Gear [Varies], Striking ST 1-5 (Assassination, -60%) [2/level], Strong Chi 1-4 [5/level], Wild Talent 1 [20], Zeroed [10], Zeroed (Ninja) [10], or replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** *Either* Callous [-5] *or* Loner (12) [-5]. ● -25 points chosen from among Code of Honor ("Stay bought") [-5] *or* (Bushido) [-15], Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; Extremely Hazardous; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-10, -15, or -20], Fanaticism (Employer, nation, or service) [-15], Intolerance (Rival nation or other large group) [-5], Obsession (Assassinate a particular target) [-5\*], Secret (Professional killer) [-20], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], or Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5]. ● Another -20 points chosen from among those traits or Bloodlust [-10\*], Callous [-5], Delusion ("Guns are no match for ninjutsu!") [-5], Insomniac [-10 or -15], Loner [-5\*], No Sense of Humor [-10], Overconfidence [-5\*], Paranoia [-10], Stubbornness [-5], Vow (Use only muscle-powered attacks) [-10], or Workaholic [-5].

**Primary Skills:** Stealth (A) DX+2 [2]-17†. ● Judo and Karate, both (H) DX [4]-15. ● Six of Fast-Draw (any), Garrote, Knife, or Thrown Weapon (Knife *or* Shuriken), all (E) DX+1 [2]-16; Axe/Mace, Broadsword, Jitte/Sai, Shortsword, Spear, Staff, Throwing, or Tonfa, all (A) DX [2]-15; Blowpipe, Flail, or Kusari, all (H) DX-1 [2]-14; or 2 points to raise one of those skills or Stealth by a level.

**Secondary Skills:** Jumping (E) DX [1]-15; Climbing (A) DX [2]-15; Acrobatics (H) DX-1 [2]-14; and Holdout and Shadowing, both (A) IQ+1 [1]-12†. ● Six of Forced Entry or Knot-Tying, both (E) DX [1]-15; Escape (H) DX-2 [1]-13; Camouflage (E) IQ+2 [1]-13†; Acting or Disguise, both (A) IQ+1 [1]-12†; Lockpicking or Traps, both (A) IQ-1 [1]-10; Poisons or Tactics, both (H) IQ-2 [1]-9; Swimming (E) HT [1]-11; Running (A) HT-1 [1]-10; Observation or Tracking, both (A) Per-1 [1]-10; any primary combat skill option at a level lower; or 1 point to raise one of these skill choices or Holdout, Jumping, or Shadowing by a level.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (p. 4 and *Heroes*, pp. 4-5).

**Martial-Arts Abilities:** A total of 10 points in any of the perks, cinematic skills, and techniques below – armed or unarmed.



*Perks:* Acrobatic Feints [1]; Compact Frame [1]; Deadly Pose [1]; Dirty Fighting 1-3 [1/level]; Finishing Move [1]; High-Heeled Heroine [1]; High-Heeled Hurt [1]; Off-Hand Weapon Training [1]; or Trademark Move [1].

*Cinematic Skills:* Flying Leap (requires Power Blow) or Pressure Points, both (H) IQ-2 [1]-9; Light Walk or Throwing Art, both (H) DX-2 [1]-13; Power Blow (H) Will-2 [1]-9; or Blind Fighting (VH) Per-3 [1]-8. Spending a total of 2 points in any skill buys it at one level higher; a total of 4 points purchases it at two levels higher; and cost is 4 points/level after that.

*Techniques:* Acrobatic Stand [1 to 6]; Arm Lock [1 to 4]; Back Kick [2 to 5]; Balancing [1 to 5]; Disappear [2 to 11]; Disarming [2 to 6]; Dual-Weapon Attack [2 to 5]; Elbow Strike [1 or 2]; Evade [1 to 5]; Feint [2 to 5]; Kicking [2 or 3]; Knee Strike [1]; Neck Snap [2 to 8]; Rappelling [1 to 4]; Retain Weapon [2 to 6]; Roll with Blow [2 or 3]; Rope Up [1 or 2]; Scaling [2 to 4]; or Toe Flip [1 to 5].

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +2 for Craftiness.

## Customization Notes

Ninjas vary – a lot. Movies offer many dramatic niches. You might be a traditionalist with several of Code of Honor, Duty, Fanaticism, Sense of Duty, and Workaholic; a youthful apprentice who has Code of Honor, Delusion, Overconfidence, and/or Vow; a vengeance-driven killer characterized by Bloodlust, Intolerance, Loner, Obsession, and Stubbornness; or a blood-thirsty murderer with problems like Bloodlust, Callous, No Sense of Humor, Paranoia, and Secret.

Abilities, too, differ immensely. For one thing, there are many primary skill choices. As well, points can shift from advantages to martial-arts tricks. Finally, a ninja can – more than most martial artists – justify being an outsider who knows *only* his art. By selecting the martial-arts master or wise master lens, he can acquire 20 *additional* points for specialized capabilities.

Some examples:

*Ghost:* Your shtick is getting to supposedly inaccessible victims. More Craftiness helps – but consider higher IQ (from advantage points and/or the wise master lens) to help you out-think security, Danger Sense to avoid it, or Zeroed (Ninja) to foil attempts to unravel your methods. Pick weapon skills for armaments that can elude metal detectors, like Staff and Tonfa. Also learn and possibly improve Escape, Forced Entry, Lockpicking, and Traps. Valuable martial-arts abilities are the Compact Frame perk; the Flying Leap and Light Walk skills; and techniques such as Balancing, Rappelling, Rope Up, and Scaling.

*Silent Death:* You prefer to avoid combat. You're a killer, not a warrior. You'll want higher Craftiness, Night Vision, Striking ST (with the Assassination limitation), and/or Zeroed (Ninja). Be sure to raise Stealth, and pick skills for some *concealable* weapons – Garrote and Knife are favorites – and improve them. To this, add improved Holdout and Shadowing, and perhaps Acting, Disguise, and Poisons. Martial-arts abilities should be sneaky, like the Dirty Fighting perk, the Blind Fighting and Light Walk skills, and the Disappear technique.

*Techno-Ninja:* It's the small things that matter to you – specifically, stun and smoke grenades, shuriken, and other nasty little surprises. You'll certainly want Gizmos and Signature Gear. Primary skills should cover concealable and ranged weaponry; Blowpipe, Garrote, Knife, Shortsword, Throwing,

and Thrown Weapon all work. Secondary skills ought to include Fast-Draw specialties for weapons – and maybe Poisons or Traps for deadlier gadgetry. The most important martial-arts ability is the Throwing Art skill, which turns “harmless” items into weapons.

*Warrior of the Night:* You confront your opponents in battle but use stealth to choose the battlefield. You relish the duel, ideally against rival ninjas! More ST and HT, Combat Reflexes, and Extra Attack all help in drag-out melees. Combat skills should cover heavy weapons: Axe/Mace, Broadsword, Flail, Spear, and Staff. Supporting skills vary, but always include Tactics. Suitable martial-arts abilities are the Deadly Pose and Off-Hand Weapon Training perks; the Power Blow skill; and the Disarming, Feint, and Retain Weapon techniques.

*He's not samurai. He's **ninja**. They're spies and assassins. Their only code is to get the job done.*

– *Batman, Batman: The Animated Series* #1.28

## TRACEUR

250 points

*A bad traceur practices a technique until he gets it right. A good traceur practices a technique until he can't get it wrong.*

– David Belle

You're a *traceur*: a *Parkour* (PK) practitioner. Your discipline isn't strictly a martial art – it's about moving from A to B as efficiently and directly as possible, surmounting obstacles using your body and objects in the environment. But “obstacles” might include enemies, so traceurs sometimes regard PK as the martial art of the chase before or after a fight. Technically, PK isn't about acrobatics, either; adding that makes it “free running.” You might not be a purist about this, however!

**Attributes:** ST 11 [10]; DX 15 [100]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 13 [30].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d-1/d+1; BL 24 lbs.; HP 11 [0]; Will 10 [0]; Per 12 [10]; FP 13 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [0]; Basic Move 8 [5].

**Advantages:** Luck [15]; Perfect Balance [15]; Trained by a Master (Evasion, -50%) [15]; and Urban Jungle Gym [1]. ● A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (p. 4 and *Heroes*, pp. 4-5), additional martial-arts abilities, ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], Will +1 to +6 [5/level], Per +1 to +6 [5/level], FP +1 to +4 [3/level], Basic Speed +1 [20], Basic Move +1 or +2 [5/level], Absolute Direction [5] or 3D Spatial Sense [10], Arm ST 1-2 [5/level], Catfall [10], Combat Reflexes [15], Daredevil [15], DR 1-2 (Limited, Crushing, -40%) [3/level], Enhanced Dodge 1-2 [15/level], Fearlessness [2/level], Fit [5] or Very Fit [15], Flexibility [5] or Double-Jointed [15], Hard to Kill 1-3 [2/level], High Pain Threshold [10], Lifting ST 1-2 [3/level], Rapid Healing [5] or Very Rapid Healing [15], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Wild Talent 1 [20], replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points, or generalize Trained by a Master (Evasion, -50%) [15] to Trained by a Master [30] for 15 points.

**Disadvantages:** -20 points chosen from among Compulsive Behavior (Physical fitness) [-5\*], Compulsive Behavior (Reaching “inaccessible” locations) [-5\*], Compulsive Behavior (Thrill-seeking) [-5\*], Delusion (“I can win any chase on foot!”) [-5], Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; Extremely Hazardous; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-10, -15, or -20], or Sense of Duty (Team) [-5]. • Another -15 points chosen from among those traits or Impulsiveness [-10\*], On the Edge [-15\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], Pacifism (Reluctant Killer) [-5] or (Cannot Harm Innocents) [-10], Post-Combat Shakes [-5\*], or Trickster [-15\*]. • A further -15 points chosen from either of the previous lists or Chummy [-5] or Loner [-5\*], Curious [-5\*], Honesty [-10\*], Intolerance (Nonathletic people) [-5], Jealousy [-10], Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5], Stubbornness [-5], Vow (No alcohol, drugs, or fatty food, just “health food”) [-5], or Workaholic [-5].

**Primary Skills:** Acrobatics (H) DX+1 [4]-16†; Climbing (A) DX+2 [4]-17†; Jumping (E) DX+2 [4]-17; and Running (A) HT+1 [4]-14.

**Secondary Skills:** Escape (H) DX-1 [2]-14 and Urban Survival (A) Per [2]-12. • Two of Brawling (E) DX+1 [2]-16; Boxing, Sumo Wrestling, or Wrestling, all (A) DX [2]-15; Judo or Karate, both (H) DX-1 [2]-14; or 2 points to raise one of those skills by a level. • Five of Bicycling, Forced Entry, Guns (Pistol), Knife, or Knot-Tying, all (E) DX+1 [2]-16; Dancing, Driving (Automobile or Motorcycle), Shortsword, Staff, Stealth, Throwing, or Tonfa, all (A) DX [2]-15; Area Knowledge (any) or Computer Operation, both (E) IQ+1 [2]-11; Lockpicking, Navigation (Land), Shadowing, or Streetwise, all (A) IQ [2]-10; Swimming (E) HT+1 [2]-14; Hiking or Lifting, both (A) HT [2]-13; or 2 points to raise any secondary skill by a level.

**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (p. 4 and *Heroes*, pp. 4-5).

**Martial-Arts Abilities:** A total of 15 points in higher primary skills or any of the perks, cinematic skills, and techniques below. Where several specialties exist, choose *unarmed* ones.

**Perks:** Acrobatic Feints [1]; Acrobatic Kicks [1]; Combat Pole-Vaulting [1]; Compact Frame [1]; or High-Heeled Heroine [1].

**Cinematic Skills:** Flying Leap (H) IQ-2 [1]-8; or Immovable Stance or Light Walk, both (H) DX-2 [1]-13. Spending a total of 2 points in any skill buys it at one level higher; a total of 4 points purchases it at two levels higher; and cost is 4 points/level after that.

**Techniques:** Acrobatic Stand [1 to 6]; Disappear [2 to 11]; Dive n’ Roll [1 to 4]; Evade [1 to 5]; Feint [2 to 5]; Flying Jump Kick [2 to 8]; Jump Kick [2 to 5]; Rappelling [1 to 4]; Roll with Blow [2 or 3]; Rope Up [1 or 2]; Running Climb [2 to 7]; Scaling [2 to 4]; Skidding [1 or 2]; Sliding [1 to 6]; Spinning [1 or 2]; Spinning Kick [2 to 4]; or Sweeping Kick [2 to 4].

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

† Includes +1 for Perfect Balance.

## Customization Notes

The traceur is a newcomer on the action scene. This makes it tricky to suggest strong personality types. A reasonable choice would be a clean-living jock with traits such as Compulsive Behavior (Physical fitness), Intolerance (Nonathletic people), Vow (No alcohol, etc.), and Workaholic – but a troublemaking punk with disadvantages like Compulsive Behavior (Reaching “inaccessible” locations), Social Stigma, and Trickster would

also work. All that’s certain is that the role demands some of Impulsiveness, On the Edge, and Overconfidence!

Not every traceur runs the same way:

**Free Runner:** You’re an urban acrobat, not a PK purist. Where’s the fun in running in straight lines? High Basic Move and Daredevil are apt advantage choices. Anything goes as far as skills are concerned; Dancing, improved Escape, and Karate (for showy kicks, not necessarily in a fight!) seem likely, and Computer Operation lets you post your cool videos to YouTube. Special-ability points might go into more Acrobatics or Running; the Acrobatic Feints and Acrobatic Kicks perks; the Flying Leap skill; or stunt techniques like Acrobatic Stand, Dive n’ Roll, Running Climb, Skidding, Sliding, and Spinning.

**Monkey:** You relish the *vertical* side of your discipline, defying walls, fences, and anything else that stands in your way. You’ll want Flexibility for its big Climbing bonus, Arm

ST for pull-ups, and Catfall and/or DR for surviving falls. Helpful skills are Knot-Tying and Throwing for ropes and grapples, plus Area Knowledge and improved Urban Survival to know your way around. Aside from higher Climbing, special-abilities points might buy the Combat Pole-Vaulting perk, the Flying Leap skill, or techniques such as Rappelling, Roll with Blow, Rope Up, Running Climb, and Scaling.

**Punk:** You are a warrior – maybe even a ruffian – but you privilege mobility above strikes and parries. Efficient uses of advantage points are combative traits like Combat Reflexes, DR, Enhanced Dodge, High Pain Threshold, and upgraded Trained by a Master. Skills should include Shadowing, Stealth, Streetwise, and probably weapons training. Useful martial-arts abilities are the Acrobatic Feints and Acrobatic Kicks perks; Immovable Stance skill; and combat techniques such as Feint, Flying Jump Kick, Jump Kick, Spinning Kick, and Sweeping Kick.



*Urban Explorer:* You use PK as a means to an end: exploring urban areas that are off-limits, like rooftops, sewers, abandoned buildings, and subway tunnels. More Perception, Absolute Direction, Flexibility (for the tiniest cracks), and Serendipity (“Oh, the door is open!”) can help. Valuable skills here are Area Knowledge, Forced Entry, Lockpicking, Stealth, and higher Urban Survival. Handy special abilities are the Compact Frame perk, the Light Walk skill (for areas condemned as dangerously unstable), and the Disappear and Evade techniques (for eluding security guards).

## WEAPON MASTER

250 points

*The character I played, Raven McCoy, her background was she was raised by circus performers. So she grew up doing a knife act. According to the show, she was the deadliest woman in the world with a knife.*

—Mia Wallace, *Pulp Fiction*

You’re an expert with a specific hand-to-hand combat weapon, and have few rivals at its use; it is to you as the gun is to the shooter (**Heroes**, p. 14). Indeed, in your hands, it is in many ways *deadlier* than a firearm. However, you realize that range is an advantage and that your favorite toy is no less detectable than a gun, so you also value stealth and concealment – although perhaps not as rabidly as the ninja (pp. 8-9).

**Attributes:** ST 13 [30]; DX 15 [100]; IQ 10 [0]; HT 11 [10].

**Secondary Characteristics:** Damage 1d/2d-1; BL 34 lbs.; HP 13 [0]; Will 10 [0]; Per 10 [0]; FP 11 [0]; Basic Speed 7.00 [10]; Basic Move 7 [0].

**Advantages:** Enhanced Parry 1 (Weapon of choice) [5]; Luck [15]; Weapon Bond (Any starting weapon) [1]; and Weapon Master (Weapon of choice) [20]. • A further 30 points chosen from among lens advantages (p. 4 and **Heroes**, pp. 4-5), additional martial-arts abilities, ST +1 to +3 [10/level], DX +1 [20], IQ +1 [20], HT +1 to +3 [10/level], Basic Speed +1 [20], Basic Move +1 to +3 [5/level], Ambidexterity [5], Arm ST 1-2 [5/level], Combat Reflexes [15], Daredevil [15], Enhanced Dodge 1-2 [15/level], Enhanced Parry 2-3 (Weapon of choice) [5/level], Extra Attack 1 [25], Gizmos 1-3 [5/gizmo], Peripheral Vision [15], Serendipity 1-2 [15/level], Signature Gear [Varies], Striking ST 1-2 [5/level], Strong Chi 1-4 [5/level], Wild Talent 1 [20], replace Luck [15] with Extraordinary Luck [30] for 15 points, or expand Weapon Master (Weapon of choice) [20] to Weapon Master (Two weapons) [25] for 5 points or Weapon Master (Small class of weapons) [30] for 10 points.

**Disadvantages:** -20 points chosen from among Code of Honor (“Fight fair!”) [-5], (Gentleman’s) [-10], or (Bushido) [-15], Duty (Agency, mob, service, or similar; Extremely Hazardous; 9, 12, or 15 or less) [-10, -15, or -20], Fanaticism (Employer, nation, or service) [-15], Intolerance (Rival nation or other large group) [-5], Obsession (Beat a specific rival) [-5\*], Secret (Illegal tournament deaths) [-20], Sense of Duty (Team) [-5], or Social Stigma (Criminal Record) [-5]. • Another -15 points chosen from among those traits or Bad Temper [-10\*], Bloodlust [-10\*], Callous [-5], Delusion (“Guns are no match for my favorite weapon!”) [-5], Honesty [-10\*], Impulsiveness [-10\*], On the Edge [-15\*], Overconfidence [-5\*], or Vow (Use only muscle-powered attacks) [-10]. • A further -15 points chosen from either of the previous lists or Distinctive Features (Dueling scars) [-1], Jealousy [-10], Loner [-5\*], Odious Personal Habits [-5 to -15], Stubbornness [-5], Trademark [-5 to -15], or Workaholic [-5].

**Primary Skills:** A total of 16 points in skills to wield your melee weapon of choice and ancillary weapons, chosen from among Fast-Draw (any), Knife, or Thrown Weapon (any), all (E) DX+2 [4]-17; Axe/Mace, Broadsword, Cloak, Jitte/Sai, Main-Gauche, Rapier, Saber, Shortsword, Smallsword, Spear, Staff, Tonfa, Two-Handed Sword, or Whip, all (A) DX+1 [4]-16; Flail, Kusari, or Two-Handed Flail, all (H) DX [4]-15; or 4 points/level to raise any of these by up to three levels.

**Secondary Skills:** Acrobatics (H) DX-1 [2]-14; Holdout (A) IQ+2 [8]-12; Jumping (E) DX [1]-15; and Stealth (A) DX [2]-15. • One of Boxing (A) DX [2]-15, Brawling (E) DX+1 [2]-16, or Karate (H) DX-1 [2]-14. • Either Judo (H) DX-1 [2]-14 or Wrestling (A) DX [2]-15. • Five of Fast-Draw (any), Guns (Pistol), or Thrown Weapon (any), all (E) DX+1 [2]-16; Throwing (A) DX [2]-15; Parry Missile Weapons (H) DX-1 [2]-14; Armoury (Melee Weapons), Connoisseur (Melee Weapons), Soldier, or Streetwise, all (A) IQ [2]-10; Tactics (H) IQ-1 [2]-9; Hiking or Running, both (A) HT [2]-11; Intimidation (A) Will [2]-10; or 2 points to raise one of these skills or Acrobatics, Stealth, or an unarmed skill by a level.

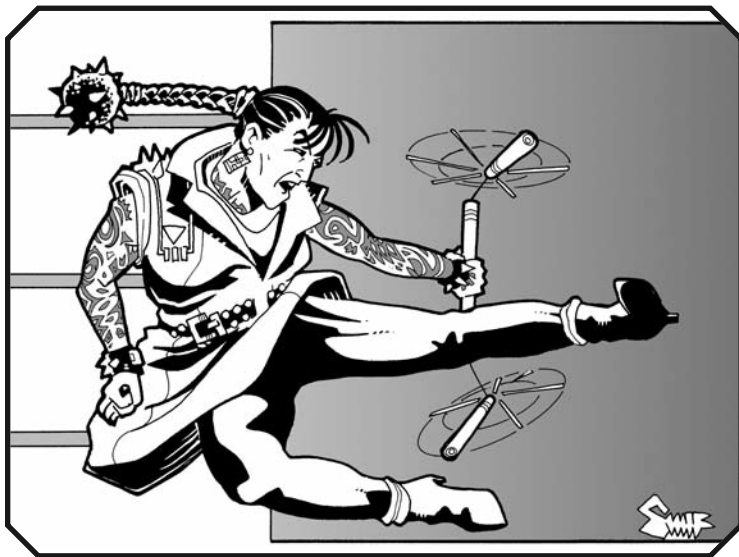
**Background Skills:** Choose a 20-point lens (p. 4 and **Heroes**, pp. 4-5). • Driving (Automobile or Motorcycle) (A) DX-1 [1]-14.

**Martial-Arts Abilities:** A total of 15 points in any of the perks, cinematic skills, and techniques below – preferably *armed* specialties, where possible.

**Perks:** Deadly Pose [1]; Dirty Fighting 1-3 [1/level]; Finishing Move [1]; Focused Fury [1]; Off-Hand Weapon Training [1]; Trademark Move [1]; or Weapon Bond [1].

*Scientist . . . marksman . . . swordsman . . . To what do you attribute your overachievements?*

— John Steed, *The Avengers* (1998)



**Cinematic Skills:** Flying Leap (requires Power Blow) or Pressure Points, both (H) IQ-2 [1]-8; Throwing Art (H) DX-2 [1]-13; Kiai (H) HT-2 [1]-9; Power Blow (H) Will-2 [1]-8; or Blind Fighting (VH) Per-3 [1]-7. Spending a total of 2 points in any skill buys it at one level higher; a total of 4 points purchases it at two levels higher; and cost is 4 points/level after that.

**Techniques:** Acrobatic Stand [1 to 6]; Arm Lock [1 to 4]; Disarming [2 to 6]; Dual-Weapon Attack [2 to 5]; Evade [1 to 5]; Feint [2 to 5]; Kicking [2 or 3]; Retain Weapon [2 to 6]; Roll with Blow [2 or 3]; Stamp Kick [2 to 4]; or Toe Flip [1 to 5].

\* Multiplied for self-control number; see p. B120.

### Customization Notes

Cinematic weapon masters are all over the map. Classics include:

**Escrimador:** Escrima, Kali . . . it's all *beating the living day-lights out of people with two sticks*. Cinema tends to portray edgy, slightly unhinged types with issues such as Bad Temper, Bloodlust, Delusion, Impulsiveness, Obsession, On the Edge, and Stubbornness, although you need not be like that. Ambidexterity is nearly universal, and improved DX, better Basic Speed, and Extra Attack can give the customary blinding speed. Sticks call for Smallsword, Shortsword, or Broadsword, depending on size. Other important skills are Judo and Karate, along with Intimidation, Streetwise, and superior Acrobatics. The Focused Fury perk and the Pressure Points and Power Blow skills are common, and the Dual-Weapon Attack technique is crucial.

**Fencer:** You're a fencing master, probably suave and carrying a sword cane. A Code of Honor is likely, often with Intolerance or Obsession toward those who've offended it; Bad Temper, Distinctive Features, and Jealousy suit hot-tempered duelists. Better IQ and Enhanced Parry help project a "scheming chess-master" image. Core skills include Smallsword (or, rarely, Saber or Rapier) and Fast-Draw (Sword), and maybe Shortsword to wield the sheath as a baton. Boxing, Connoisseur, Tactics, and better Acrobatics fit the archetype. Extra Weapon Bond perks are common, Flying Leap allows flashy

lunges, and crucial techniques are Disarming and Feint. If you fight sword-and-dagger or sword-and-cane, extend Weapon Master to *two* weapons and add Off-Hand Weapon Training and Dual-Weapon Attack.

**Knife-Fighter:** Knives are cheap, common, concealable, and quite deadly when used properly. As a cinematic knife-fighter, you're expected to be sly and ruthless; Bloodlust, Callous, Loner, Secret, and Social Stigma fit. As for advantages, better ST (regular, Arm, or Striking) can offset low knife damage, although a knife can benefit from at most effective ST 15 if small or ST 18 if large; Combat Reflexes or Enhanced Parry can offset the Parry penalty; and Extra Attack lets you fight like in the movies. Knife, Fast-Draw (Knife), and Thrown Weapon (Knife) are your go-to skills. You'll also want Brawling and Wrestling for backup, and street smarts in the form of Guns, Intimidation, Running, Streetwise, and better Stealth. Important martial-arts abilities are the Dirty Fighting and Focused Fury perks; the Power Blow skill; and decent levels of Disarming, Evade, and Feint.

**Samurai:** You're a master of the katana. A strict Code of Honor is likely, alongside a few of Bad Temper, Bloodlust, Fanaticism, Honesty, Sense of Duty, and Vow, the details of which depend on how you perceive "honor." Striking ST and increased Basic Speed are valuable for killing with the first strike. Learn Broadsword and Fast-Draw (Sword) for one-handed use, and/or Two-Handed Sword and Fast-Draw (Two-Handed Sword) for two hands. Back this up with Intimidation, Judo, Karate, and Parry Missile Weapons. Also get a few of the Deadly Pose perk, the Kiai and Power Blow skills, and the Retain Weapon technique (don't lose that ancestral blade!). For two swords, broaden Weapon Master to *two* weapons, add Shortsword for the wakizashi, and buy Dual-Weapon Attack and Off-Hand Weapon Training.

*We're gonna need something  
with a little bit more kick.*

– Sarge, **Doom** (2005)

**Sarge:** Cinematic soldiers sometimes focus heavily on melee, despite their guns and grenades. Soldierly disadvantages such as Duty, Fanaticism, and Sense of Duty are good, and screaming drill sergeants often have Bad Temper, Distinctive Features, Odious Personal Habits, Stubbornness, and Workaholic. Boost Weapon Master to cover a small class of arms, and consider Combat Reflexes or more HT. Vital primary skills are Axe/Mace for shovels, Knife, Spear for fixed bayonets, and Staff for rifle butts. Other training includes Hiking, Intimidation, Soldier, Tactics, and the military lens and its Guns skills. Buy the Focused Fury perk, the Throwing Art skill (so you can *hurl* all this junk), and the Arm Lock, Retain Weapon, and Stamp Kick techniques to round out your capabilities.

# CHAPTER TWO

# MARTIAL-ARTS

# ABILITIES

*Cool moves* – represented by advantages, perks, skills, and techniques – set martial artists apart from other action heroes. It's up to the GM whether non-martial artists can have such abilities . . . but probably not. After all, martial artists don't get Gunslinger, a special Higher Purpose, or Quick Gadeteer. Each archetype needs its own shticks!

Gamers who crave further martial-arts abilities will want **GURPS Martial Arts**, which offers pages of perks, a whole *chapter* of techniques, extensive notes on many more advantages, and additional cinematic skills. This section is still useful to readers who own that book, though. It offers several time-saving simplifications – and even a few completely new perks and techniques!

## ADVANTAGES

A few advantages require special notes for martial artists.

### Arm ST

see p. B40

*Prerequisite:* Trained by a Master or Weapon Master.

Beefy and suitably cinematic martial artists may have up to two levels of this trait, at 5 points/level. It adds to ST when making armed or unarmed strikes using only the arms (never kicks), and when grappling with the arms (but not for take-downs, pins, or similar full-body wrestling).

### Claws

see p. B42

*Prerequisites:* Trained by a Master and Iron Hands.

Some martial artists turn their fists into *lethal weapons* by pounding on sides of meat or car doors. Represent this with Blunt Claws [3], the sole effect of which is +1 *per die* to punching damage.

### Damage Resistance

see p. B46

*Prerequisite:* Trained by a Master.

True masters of the unarmed arts may purchase DR 1-2 (Limited, Crushing, -40%) [3/level]. This protects only against punches, kicks, clubs, falls, collisions, etc. – never blades, bullets, fire, acid, or anything else that isn't simple blunt force.

Heroes who lack Trained by a Master can *never* gain this advantage, no matter what story they cook up!

### Enhanced Defenses

see p. B51

*Prerequisite:* Trained by a Master or Weapon Master.

Martial artists may have up to *three* levels of Enhanced Dodge [15/level], Enhanced Parry (Bare Hands) [5/level], Enhanced Parry (One melee weapon) [5/level], or Enhanced Parry (All) [10/level].

### Extra Attack

see p. B53

*Prerequisite:* Trained by a Master or Weapon Master.

Martial artists with this advantage can still trade only *one* attack for *one* of a Dual-Weapon Attack (p. B417) or a Rapid Strike (p. B370) or Very Rapid Strike (p. 25) each turn. All their other attacks are in addition to this.

### Lifting ST

see p. B65

*Prerequisite:* Trained by a Master.

Cinematic grapplers may have up to two levels of this advantage. It adds to ST for all purposes when *grappling*, but never for strikes – armed or unarmed.



## Striker

see p. B88

*Prerequisite:* Trained by a Master.

Martial artists can smash their shins into palm trees or metal poles to turn them into deadly weapons. Represent this with Striker (Crushing; Shin, -20%) [4]. The special limitation works as follows:

*Shin:* Your crushing Striker isn't a new body part – it's just your shin. The sole effect is that you can throw kicks that enjoy +1 *per die* of damage. -20%.

## Striking ST

see p. B88

*Prerequisite:* Trained by a Master or Weapon Master.

Cinematic martial artists who can hit even harder than their size suggests may have up to two levels of this advantage. It adds to ST for armed and unarmed *strikes* in melee combat, but never for grappling of any sort.

Ninjas may instead opt to have up to *five* levels with the following limitation:

*Assassination:* Your extra oomph is explained by careful preparation and knowledge of physiology – not by physical conditioning. Thus, this ST only boosts *surprise* attacks, including ambushes arranged via Stealth and blows from behind. If your victim receives an active defense, even at -4 for being stunned, you can't claim this bonus. -60%.

## Talent

see p. B89 and *Heroes*, p. 19

Martial artists may have any Talent from the *Basic Set* or *Heroes*, but one new Talent exists to help them master their IQ-, Will-, and Per-based cinematic skills without being geniuses. It doesn't modify *every* cinematic skill – only the ones most useful for leaping through the air and damaging things!

*Strong Chi:* Breaking Blow, Flying Leap, Power Blow, Pressure Points, and Pressure Secrets. *Reaction bonus:* other martial artists, especially potential masters or students. 5 *points/level*.

## Trained by a Master

see p. B93

This trait need not mean that you learned deadly secrets at the knee of a True Master – or even that you were taught at all. You *might* have spent years in some monastery or dojo. Then again, you could be self-taught. What this advantage *does* mean is that you're at the pinnacle of physical fitness, and enjoy these benefits:

- Access to some or all of Blind Fighting, Breaking Blow, Flying Leap, Immovable Stance, Kiai, Light Walk, Power Blow, Pressure Points, Pressure Secrets, Push, and Throwing Art.
- Access to exotic traits that are normally off-limits to ordinary humans – that is, any advantage, perk, or technique that specifically requires this advantage.
- Half the usual penalties for Rapid Strike (p. B370) and multiple parries (p. B376).

• No -2 to hit with melee attacks when using *Athletics in Combat* (*Exploits*, p. 37) – just as a Gunslinger can ignore this penalty when shooting – and no -2 to Chase Rolls when trying Move and Attack at Close range (*Exploits*, p. 33).

• The ability to use *Acrobatics Galore* (p. 23), *Extra Steps* (p. 24), and *Very Rapid Strike* (p. 25).

Traceurs also have this advantage, but with a special limitation:

*Evasion:* Your art focuses on movement more than violence. You can purchase Arm ST and Lifting ST (for pull-ups), Damage Resistance (for surviving falls), and Enhanced Dodge . . . but more-combative cinematic advantages are off-limits, meaning you can't buy Claws, Enhanced Parry, Extra Attack, Focused Fury, Iron Hands, Striker, or Striking ST. Your cinematic skills list is limited to Flying Leap (this *doesn't* require Power Blow for you), Immovable Stance, and Light Walk, while the only cinematic techniques you may learn are Disappear, Flying Jump Kick, and Roll with Blow. You do have access to *Acrobatics Galore* and *Extra Steps*, and can ignore the -2 on melee attacks for *Athletics in Combat* and to Chase Rolls for Move and Attack, but you still suffer the full penalties for Rapid Strikes and multiple parries, and cannot use *Very Rapid Strike*. -50%.

## Weapon Master

see p. B99

This advantage is nearly always limited to a subset of all melee weapons. The most common forms are Weapon Master (Ninja Weapons) [35] (for anything with an Asian name or Holdout 0 to -2) and Weapon Master (One melee weapon) [20]. Weapon Master gives the ability to use *Acrobatics Galore* (p. 23) and *Extra Steps* (p. 24), plus these extra benefits *when using a suitable weapon*:

- Access to some or all of Blind Fighting, Flying Leap, Kiai, Light Walk, Power Blow, Pressure Points, and Throwing Art.
- Access to exotic traits that are normally off-limits to ordinary humans – that is, any advantage, perk, or technique that specifically requires this advantage.
- Damage bonus of +1 *per die* if you know the relevant weapon skill at DX+1, rising to +2 *per die* if you know that skill at DX+2 or better.
- Half the usual penalties for Rapid Strike (p. B370), multiple parries (p. B376), and *Multiple Fast-Draws* (p. 24).
- No -2 to hit with melee attacks when using *Athletics in Combat* (*Exploits*, p. 37) and no -2 to Chase Rolls when trying Move and Attack at Close range (*Exploits*, p. 33).
- The ability to use *Ranged Rapid Strike* (pp. 24-25) and *Very Rapid Strike* (p. 25).

## Zeroed

see p. B100

Ninjas may buy a special version of Zeroed instead of or as well as the standard one:

*Zeroed (Ninja):* Unless you're caught red-handed, it's difficult to prove your role in deeds like break-ins and assassinations – everybody knows that ninjas don't exist, so the fact that you are one complicates the investigation! You could garrote a guard, dice his partner with a ninja-to, and pepper the place with shuriken, and detectives will suspect anybody but a ninja.

Regardless of the evidence, those using Criminology, Forensics, Tracking, etc. against you must *win* a Quick Contest with your Stealth to learn anything about you once you've left the scene. This *replaces* the standard benefits of Zeroed: You can have a normal life, and what's obscured isn't your identity but its ties to your deeds. *Prerequisite*: Trained by a Master or Weapon Master. *10 points*.

## PERKS

Off-Hand Weapon Training and Weapon Bond (*Heroes*, p. 18) are both available for melee weapons. As well, martial artists may buy the perks below for 1 point apiece.

### Acrobatic Feints

You may use Acrobatics instead of a combat skill in order to make a Feint maneuver (p. B365).

### Acrobatic Kicks

You may base kicks on Acrobatics instead of Brawling or Karate. For an ordinary kick, this means a roll against Acrobatics-2. Acrobatics itself gives no damage bonus, but you may apply any Brawling or Karate bonus you possess.

### Combat Pole-Vaulting

You can use a pole to make impressive vaults in combat. You must take a Ready maneuver to prepare it. On later turns, you may *either* claim a bonus equal to (pole's length in yards)-1 to Acrobatics and Jumping rolls to leap, evade, etc., *or* add the pole's length to jumping distance – choose one benefit per feat. Maximum *useful* length is four yards, giving +3 to skill or +4 yards of distance. To wield the pole as a weapon, you must take another Ready maneuver.

*No fancy gadgets, no secret weapons –  
wonder why? He **is** a weapon.*

*– Adam Quill,  
Spy Game (1997) #1.1*

### Compact Frame

You get +1 to Escape rolls to fit through tight spaces. See *Squeezing* (*Exploits*, p. 20).

### Cowpoker

You can kick with pointy-toed boots (use the reinforced boots on p. 31 of *Heroes*) for thrust-1 *piercing* damage, plus unarmed skill bonuses.

### Deadly Pose

Immediately after you send an enemy to the ground by tripping him, dealing a major wound, knocking him out, killing him, etc., you may make a “kill face,” pose with your katana in his liver, or the like for a free Intimidation attempt (no need for a Concentrate maneuver). Roll as explained under *Uttering Threats* (*Exploits*, p. 39). The -5 for combat *does* apply, but you get +2 for a knockout or +5 for a fatality, plus another +1 if body parts come off!

### Dirty Fighting

You get +1 to any feint or attack delivered as a “sucker punch” *before* combat begins. This *is* cumulative with the effects of *Hidden Weapons* (*Exploits*, p. 37) – and like that rule, works just once as a fight-opener. Unlike most perks, this one comes in three levels: two points give +2 to your opening shot and three points grant +3.

### Finishing Move

You have a move that's especially deadly against beaten foes. You must specialize by attack: Finishing Move (Brawling Punch), Finishing Move (Neck Snap), Finishing Move (Smallsword Thrust), etc. When you use the chosen attack on someone *you* have stunned or knocked out in melee combat, add +1 per die of damage.

### Focused Fury

*Prerequisite*: Trained by a Master or Weapon Master.

Unlike most warriors, you can combine *Mighty Blows* (p. 24) with All-Out Attack (Strong), gaining a total damage bonus equal to the *better* of +2 *per die* or a flat +3. This use of Mighty Blows still costs 1 FP per attack.

### High-Heeled Heroine

You can run, climb, fight, and so on while wearing high heels without suffering any special penalty for bad footing.

### High-Heeled Hurt

*Prerequisite*: High-Heeled Heroine.

You can kick with high-heeled footwear, dealing thrust-1 *large piercing* damage, plus unarmed skill bonuses.

### Iron Hands

*Prerequisite*: Trained by a Master.

You have DR 1 on your *hands*. This is tough skin, and doesn't protect against contact poison or anything else you wouldn't want to touch.

### Trademark Move

A Trademark Move is a prescription for one full turn's worth of combat actions. Write down *every* detail when you buy it; e.g., “All-Out Attack (Strong) with Karate, thrown as a Rapid Strike with two karate chops to the neck, at skill 10 and 1d+2 crushing, followed by a kick to the groin, at skill 13 and 1d+3 crushing.” Damage and attack rolls can improve with ST, DX, and skill, but you can't change the *weapons, maneuvers, combat options, or hit locations*. In return for committing a point to such a specific move, you're at +1 on all skill rolls made to execute it exactly as written – no substitutions.

Each Trademark Move is its own perk and *must* be distinctive. The GM is free to forbid one that isn't! A Trademark Move *can* also be a Finishing Move (above).

### Urban Jungle Gym

*Prerequisites*: Acrobatics, Climbing, and Jumping at 16+.

You're exempt from skill and attribute rolls to perform the moves under *Climbing* and *Parkour* (*Exploits*, pp. 18-20) when traveling from A to B “off-screen.” The game effect is that the GM will let you use full Move through an urban area, regardless of what's in the way. You're leaping between rooftops, taking shortcuts, etc.

# TECHNIQUES

While techniques (pp. B229-233) are *almost* too complicated for **Action** campaigns, they're vital to martial artists. For ease of use, these ones dispense with difficulties and maxima, and simply pre-price all the allowed levels.

Anyone can try any technique at its 0-point level. Higher levels are given relative to the prerequisite skill, and cost points. If a technique is valid for several skills, specify which skill you're improving it for; e.g., "Arm Lock (Wrestling)."

It isn't cost-effective to buy many techniques for one skill – just improve the skill. Most heroes pick at most *one* "signature move" per skill!

## Acrobatic Stand

*Prerequisite:* Acrobatics.

*Cost:* skill-6 [0], skill-5 [1], skill-4 [2], skill-3 [3], skill-2 [4], skill-1 [5], or skill [6].

This lets you buy off the -6 to Acrobatics noted in *Acrobatic Stand* (**Exploits**, p. 37).

## Arm Lock

see pp. B230, B403

*Prerequisite:* Judo or Wrestling.

*Cost:* skill [0], skill+1 [1], skill+2 [2], skill+3 [3], or skill+4 [4].

## Back Kick

see p. B230

*Prerequisite:* Karate (or Acrobatics, with the Acrobatic Kicks perk).

*Cost:* skill-4 [0], skill-3 [2], skill-2 [3], skill-1 [4], or skill [5].

## Balancing

*Prerequisite:* Acrobatics.

*Cost:* skill [0], skill+1 [1], skill+2 [2], skill+3 [3], skill+4 [4], or skill+5 [5].

If you've raised this technique, use it *instead* of Acrobatics with *Balancing* (**Exploits**, p. 19). This trick is redundant if you have Perfect Balance!

## Choke Hold

see pp. B230, B404

*Prerequisite:* Judo or Wrestling.

*Cost:* skill-2 [0], skill-1 [2], or skill [3].

**Furious Fists** assumes that this isn't any harder for Wrestling!

## Disappear

*Prerequisites:* Stealth and Trained by a Master or Weapon Master (Ninja Weapons).

*Cost:* skill-10 [0], skill-9 [2], skill-8 [3], skill-7 [4], skill-6 [5], skill-5 [6], skill-4 [7], skill-3 [8], skill-2 [9], skill-1 [10], or skill [11].

Disappear – trademark move of many a ninja – lets you buy off the -10 to use Stealth to vanish from sight in combat by dashing behind cover. See *Disappearing* (**Exploits**, p. 37).

## Disarming

see pp. B230, B400

*Prerequisite:* Any melee combat skill.

*Cost:* skill [0], skill+1 [2], skill+2 [3], skill+3 [4], skill+4 [5], or skill+5 [6].

## Dive n' Roll

*Prerequisite:* Acrobatics.

*Cost:* skill-4 [0], skill-3 [1], skill-2 [2], skill-1 [3], or skill [4].

This lets you buy off the -4 to Acrobatics for *Diving* (**Exploits**, p. 19).

## Dual-Weapon Attack

see pp. B230, B417

*Prerequisite:* Any one-handed combat skill.

*Cost:* skill-4 [0], skill-3 [2], skill-2 [3], skill-1 [4], or skill [5].

Remember that you can use *either* Dual-Weapon Attack or Rapid Strike (p. B370) – never both – on any given turn.

## Elbow Drop

*Prerequisite:* Brawling or Wrestling.

*Cost:* skill-4 [0], skill-3 [2], skill-2 [3], skill-1 [4], or skill [5].

This is an elbow-first drop from a standing posture onto a foe beneath you – kneeling, prone, or even standing if you drop from a height. Roll against your technique level to hit. Your victim may dodge or parry, but parries are at -2.

If you hit, you inflict thrust+2 crushing, or thrust at +1 *per die* if better. If using Brawling, add its damage bonus; with Wrestling, treat its ST bonus as a damage bonus (+1 at DX+1, +2 at DX+2 or better). If your target isn't already on the ground, he must make his DX roll or be knocked down.

If you miss, you hit the ground and suffer the damage you would have inflicted.

Either way, you end up lying face-up on the ground, at -2 to defend and unable to retreat.

## Elbow Strike

see pp. B230, B404

*Prerequisite:* Brawling or Karate.

*Cost:* skill-2 [0], skill-1 [1], or skill [2].

## Evade

*Prerequisite:* Acrobatics or Judo.

*Cost:* skill [0], skill+1 [1], skill+2 [2], skill+3 [3], skill+4 [4], or skill+5 [5].

This technique improves Acrobatics for the purpose of *Acrobatic Evade* (**Exploits**, p. 37). Those with Judo can use that skill the same way and base this technique on it.



## Feint

see pp. B231, B365

*Prerequisite:* Any melee combat skill (or Acrobatics, with the Acrobatic Feints perk).

*Cost:* skill [0], skill+1 [2], skill+2 [3], skill+3 [4], or skill+4 [5].

## Flying Jump Kick

*Prerequisites:* Karate (or Acrobatics, with the Acrobatic Kicks perk) and Trained by a Master.

*Cost:* skill-7 [0], skill-6 [2], skill-5 [3], skill-4 [4], skill-3 [5], skill-2 [6], skill-1 [7], or skill [8].

This devastating blow gets extra power from a running jump. It's its own maneuver – don't use Attack, All-Out Attack, Move and Attack, etc. – and *all* you can on your turn, no matter what abilities you have.

To launch a Flying Jump Kick (FJK), you must run your full Move toward your foe and roll against Jumping. If successful, roll against your FJK level to hit. Your victim parries at -2. If you connect, you do thrust crushing damage, plus your Karate bonus, plus another +2 – or +1 *per die*, if better.

Hit or miss, you have -2 on all defense rolls and cannot dodge or retreat after a FJK. If you miss either the Jumping roll or the attack roll, you must roll DX-8 or Acrobatics-4 to avoid a fall. On a fall, you suffer the damage you would have inflicted!

## Ground Fighting

see p. B231

*Prerequisite:* Any melee combat skill.

*Cost:* skill-4 [0], skill-3 [2], skill-2 [3], skill-1 [4], or skill [5].

This works as described on p. B231, with one exception: Ignore the roll to reduce the defense penalty. Simply treat the penalty as -2 instead of -3 with 2-3 points in this technique, or as -1 with 4-5 points in it.

## Jump Kick

see p. B231

*Prerequisite:* Karate (or Acrobatics, with the Acrobatic Kicks perk).

*Cost:* skill-4 [0], skill-3 [2], skill-2 [3], skill-1 [4], or skill [5].

## Kicking

see p. B231

*Prerequisite:* Brawling or Karate (or Acrobatics, with the Acrobatic Kicks perk).

*Cost:* skill-2 [0], skill-1 [2], or skill [3].

## Knee Strike

see pp. B232, B404

*Prerequisite:* Brawling or Karate.

*Cost:* skill-1 [0] or skill [1].

## Leg Lock

*Prerequisite:* Judo or Wrestling.

*Cost:* skill [0], skill+1 [1], skill+2 [2], skill+3 [3], or skill+4 [4].

This works just like Arm Lock (pp. B230, B403), except that you must parry a kick or grapple a leg before attempting it, and legs are tougher – your victim gets +4 to all ST or HT rolls to resist injury.

## Lethal Kick

*Prerequisites:* Karate and Trained by a Master.

*Cost:* skill-4 [0], skill-3 [2], skill-2 [3], skill-1 [4], or skill [5].

This technique lets you buy off the -2 to hit under *Lethal Strike* (p. B404) along with the -2 for a kick. It converts your kick's damage from thrust crushing to thrust-1 *piercing* (plus bonuses), allowing you to target the vitals or eyes. Those with Cowpoker (p. 15) or High-Heeled Hurt (p. 15) and matching footwear don't need Lethal Kick – any kick will do!

## Lethal Strike

*Prerequisites:* Karate and Trained by a Master.

*Cost:* skill-2 [0], skill-1 [2], or skill [3].

This works like Lethal Kick, but with a punch. It converts your strike's damage from thrust-1 crushing to thrust-2 *piercing* (plus bonuses).

## Finishing Moves

Action-movie martial artists save "big damage" attacks for enemies who don't *need* much more damage. That's because such moves are often risky, and best used against mooks who can't fight back! Techniques suitable for this are Elbow Drop, Flying Jump Kick, Jump Kick, Lethal Kick, Lethal Strike, Neck Snap, Piledriver, Spinning Kick, Spinning Punch, Stamp Kick, Uppercut, and Wrench (Limb). Consider buying one of these to use as a *coup de grâce* – and perhaps defining it as a Finishing Move (p. 15) and/or a Trademark Move (p. 15).

## Neck Snap

see pp. B232, B404

*Cost:* ST-4 [0], ST-3 [2], ST-2 [3], ST-1 [4], ST [5], ST+1 [6], ST+2 [7], or ST+3 [8].

## Piledriver

*Prerequisites:* Wrestling and Trained by a Master.

*Cost:* skill-5 [0], skill-4 [2], skill-3 [3], skill-2 [4], skill-1 [5], or skill [6].

Piledriver involves grappling your opponent, inverting him, and sitting down *hard* to drive his skull into the ground. It's a special All-Out Attack – use these rules *instead* of those on p. B365.

To execute a Piledriver, you must first grapple your opponent with two hands by the arms, torso, or legs. If your enemy fails to break free on his turn, then on your *next* turn, make a Piledriver roll to pull off this move. This counts as an attack. If your victim's weight exceeds your BL×4, your attack fails automatically – but still roll, to see if you *critically* fail!

Your victim may defend at -2 to Parry or -1 to Dodge for being grappled. He can “parry” with an unarmed skill by twisting his body.

A successful Piledriver does thrust+2 at +2 *per die*, plus damage equal to your ST bonus from Wrestling (+1 at DX+1, +2 at DX+2 or better). Apply this to the skull. You can also attempt a pin immediately as a *free action*. Your opponent may resist as usual, if in any shape to do so.

If your Piledriver fails for any reason but being too weak to lift your foe, including a successful enemy defense, you still drop to a sitting posture and must roll against HT. A failed HT roll means you suffer the damage you would have inflicted! Critical failure on the Piledriver roll means this happens *automatically* (no HT roll).

## Proxy Fighting

*Prerequisite:* Boxing, Brawling, or Karate.

*Cost:* skill-4 [0], skill-3 [2], skill-2 [3], skill-1 [4], or skill [5].

Proxy Fighting lets you buy off the -4 to hit when you kick or punch objects into foes, as explained in *Shoving Stuff into People* (**Exploits**, p. 37).

## Rappelling

*Prerequisite:* Climbing.

*Cost:* skill-1 [0], skill [1], skill+1 [2], skill+2 [3], or skill+3 [4].

This technique lets you buy off the -1 to Climbing skill for *Rappelling* (**Exploits**, p. 19) – and even improve your ability above basic skill.

## Retain Weapon

see pp. B232, B400

*Prerequisite:* Any Melee Weapon skill.

*Cost:* skill [0], skill+1 [2], skill+2 [3], skill+3 [4], skill+4 [5], or skill+5 [6].

## Roll with Blow

*Prerequisites:* Acrobatics or any unarmed combat skill and Trained by a Master or Weapon Master.

*Cost:* skill-2 [0], skill-1 [2], or skill [3].

Whenever you're hit by a *crushing* attack, you may roll against Roll with Blow to reduce damage.

Success means you take half damage (round up) *before* subtracting DR . . . but *double* the basic damage roll to calculate knockback (p. B378). Make a DX roll at -1 per yard of knockback to avoid falling down. Critical success on Roll with Blow means you take only 1 point of damage (extra knockback still applies).

Failure means you take normal damage *and* extra knockback. On a critical failure, you *also* fall down automatically and are physically stunned!

## Rope Up

see p. B233

*Prerequisite:* Climbing.

*Cost:* skill-2 [0], skill-1 [1], or skill [2].

This technique lets you buy off the -2 to Climbing skill for climbing up a rope. See *Climbing* (**Exploits**, p. 19).

## Running Climb

*Prerequisite:* Acrobatics or Jumping.

*Cost:* skill [0], skill+1 [2], skill+2 [3], skill+3 [4], skill+4 [5], skill+5 [6], or skill+6 [7].

If you've raised this technique, use it *instead* of Acrobatics or Jumping when rolling for the stunts under *Running Climb* (**Exploits**, p. 19).

## Scaling

see p. B233

*Prerequisite:* Climbing.

*Cost:* skill-3 [0], skill-2 [2], skill-1 [3], or skill [4].

This technique lets you buy off the -3 to Climbing skill when scaling a building. See *Climbing* (**Exploits**, p. 19).

*I'm crazy, but I'm not stupid.*

– Jackie Chan

## Skidding

*Cost:* DX-2 [0], DX-1 [1], or DX [2].

This technique lets you buy off the -2 to DX (or, if you have it, Skiing) when making use of *Skidding* (**Exploits**, p. 19).

## Sliding

*Prerequisite:* Acrobatics.

*Cost:* skill [0], skill+1 [1], skill+2 [2], skill+3 [3], skill+4 [4], skill+5 [5], or skill+6 [6].

If you've improve this technique, it *replaces* DX or Acrobatics when rolling for the feats under *Sliding* (**Exploits**, p. 19). You cannot eliminate the full penalty for a standing slide – Sliding at skill+6, with the -8, lets you try this at Acrobatics-2.

## Spinning

*Prerequisite:* Acrobatics or Running.

*Cost:* skill-2 [0], skill-1 [1], or skill [2].

This technique lets you buy off the -2 to Acrobatics or DX-based Running assessed in *Spinning* (**Exploits**, p. 20).

## Spinning Kick

*Prerequisite:* Karate (or Acrobatics, with the Acrobatic Kicks perk).

*Cost:* skill-3 [0], skill-2 [2], skill-1 [3], or skill [4].

When you use Spinning Kick, roll a Quick Contest between your Spinning Kick level and your opponent's best melee combat skill *before* your attack roll. If you win, subtract your margin of victory from your foe's defense roll against the kick. If you lose, he adds *his* margin of victory to his defense!

Then roll your attack, also against Spinning Kick. If you hit, your target may use any active defense, adjusted by the above modifier. The kick does thrust crushing damage plus Karate bonuses.

Hit or miss, you're at -3 on all defense rolls and cannot dodge or retreat after your Spinning Kick. If you miss, you must also roll DX-2 or fall down.

As an All-Out Attack, use the same rules with an extra -2 to skill on both rolls and +2 to damage – or +1 *per die*, if better. This is instead of the normal All-Out Attack options, and represents spinning *very* quickly! Naturally, you have *no* defense afterward.

## Spinning Punch

*Prerequisite:* Karate.

*Cost:* skill-2 [0], skill-1 [2], or skill [3].

Use the rules for Spinning Kick, except that damage is only thrust-1 plus bonuses, like a punch; instead of being unable to dodge or retreat afterward, you can't *parry* or retreat; and you won't fall down if you miss.

## Stamp Kick

*Prerequisite:* Brawling or Karate (or Acrobatics, with the Acrobatic Kicks perk).

*Cost:* skill-3 [0], skill-2 [2], skill-1 [3], or skill [4].

This damaging kick can only target an opponent who's lying down, or the foot or leg of a standing foe. Roll against Stamp Kick to hit. Damage is thrust+1, plus Brawling or Karate bonus. On a miss, make a DX roll to avoid ending up off-balance and unable to retreat until next turn.

## Sweeping Kick

see *Sweep*, p. B232

*Prerequisite:* Judo, Karate, or Sumo Wrestling (or Acrobatics, with the Acrobatic Kicks perk).

*Cost:* skill-3 [0], skill-2 [2], skill-1 [3], skill [4].

## Toe Flip

*Cost:* DX-5 [0], DX-4 [1], DX-3 [2], DX-2 [3], DX-1 [4], or DX [5].

This lets you eliminate the -5 to DX for *Flipping a Weapon to Your Hand* (*Exploits*, p. 39). You must specialize by Melee Weapon skill. If you know Fast-Draw for a given weapon type, you may base this technique on it instead of on DX.

## Uppercut

*Prerequisite:* Boxing, Brawling, or Karate.

*Cost:* skill-1 [0] or skill [1].

You can only use this powerful punch against the skull, eye, face, neck, torso, or arm of a standing foe. Damage is thrust crushing plus skill bonuses. Your target defends normally.

## Wrench (Limb)

*Cost:* ST-4 [0], ST-3 [2], ST-2 [3], ST-1 [4], ST [5], ST+1 [6], ST+2 [7], or ST+3 [8].

This technique is similar to Neck Snap (p. 17, p. B232), but improves the ST-based roll to maul a limb as described on p. B404. You must learn Wrench Arm and Wrench Leg separately. Legs resist wrenching at +4.

# How Much Damage Do I Do?

A martial artist's many abilities can make it tricky to calculate melee damage! Here's a "cheat sheet":

1. Total the applicable ST for your attack. Start with your ST attribute and add Striking ST for a strike or Lifting ST for a grappling move. Add Arm ST for attacks that employ only the upper body – mainly punches, elbows, and weapons. If you successfully use Power Blow (p. B215), double or triple the sum, as appropriate.

2. Look up effective ST on the *Damage Table* (p. B16) and read off thrust or swing damage, as suits the attack. Most unarmed moves use thrust. Weapons may use either – check the weapon tables (pp. 20-22).

3. Apply any damage modifier for the attack itself: punches and elbows get thrust-1, and kicks and knees use thrust, but some techniques (pp. 16-19) differ. For weapons, damage modifiers appear on the weapon table, after "sw" or "thr."

4. Apply any bonus for an enhanced body part or weapon. Barehanded, you enjoy +1 *per die* when punching with Blunt Claws (p. 13) or kicking with Striker (Shin) (p. 14). If you use brass knuckles when punching or heavy boots when kicking, you get a *flat* +1 instead. With a blade of fine or very fine quality, you receive a *flat* +1 or +2, respectively.

5. Apply any bonus for the *skill* you're attacking with: Boxing, Brawling, or Karate for punches; Brawling or Karate for elbows, kicks, or knees; Sumo Wrestling or Wrestling for grappling moves; or Melee Weapon skill for strikes with weapons for which you have Weapon Master. The bonus is +1 *per die* for Karate at DX; Boxing, Sumo Wrestling, Wrestling, or Melee Weapon at DX+1; or Brawling at DX+2 or better. It's +2 *per die* for Karate at DX+1 or better, or for Boxing, Sumo Wrestling, Wrestling or Melee Weapon at DX+2 or better.

6. When employing Mighty Blows (p. 24) or All-Out Attack (Strong) (p. B365), add a *flat* +2 or +1 *per die*, whichever is better. With Focused Fury (p. 15), you can use both; the bonus becomes the better of a *flat* +3 or +2 *per die*.

7. If the attack is a Finishing Move (p. 15) and your victim is stunned or worse, add *another* +1 *per die*.

8. Optionally, convert large adds to dice as explained on p. B269.

To save time, do this in advance – before the game starts – for any attack you think you'll use. If you'll sometimes use different options, note them; e.g., "Punch 1d+3 (+2 w. AOA or Mighty Blows, or +3 w. Focused Fury; +1 w. brass knuckles)."

# CHAPTER THREE

# MARTIAL-ARTS

# WEAPONS

Authentic weapons from the Far East – and other exotic arms – are inseparable from martial-arts action! Like the melee weapons on p. 33 of *Heroes*, those tabulated here use the notation from pp. B268-271, and can have several options:

*Disguised*: The weapon is crafted to resemble a mundane item that could conceal it – the shuriken belt buckle is a classic. Discovering the weapon requires a Search roll. This option is popular with ninjas! +4 CF.

*Fine*\*: All TL8 blades are automatically fine, and thus get +1 to *cutting* and *impaling* damage. This bonus isn't included on the weapon tables. Be sure to claim it!

*Styled*: Hand carving, gold wire around the grip, etc. gives a reaction or Influence roll bonus whenever the weapon is the center of attention. +1 bonus for +1 CF, +2 for +4 CF, and +3 for +9 CF.

*Very Fine*\*: Any TL8 *sword* or *knife* can be very fine, and enjoy +2 to *cutting* and *impaling* damage. +3 CF.

\* Fine and very fine are mutually exclusive.

## Dressing to Kill

The clothes and clothing options on p. 31 of *Heroes* should stand martial artists in good stead. Don't overlook sap gloves and reinforced boots! Two further notes:

*Is That a Katana In Your Pocket?* Melee weapons have Holdout penalties as severe as -6. The Bulk scores of ranged weapons work identically. To offset this, wear a long coat (+4 to Holdout) and/or clothing with the *undercover* option (+1 or +2 to Holdout). These bonuses *do* "stack."

*Ninja!* Treat the classic "ninja suit" – complete with hood and toe socks (*tabi*) – as a suit of ordinary clothing with the *camouflage* option, typically specialized for night. It often has the *undercover* option, too.

### Martial-Arts Melee Weapon Table

Weapon	Damage	Reach	Parry	Cost	Weight	ST	Holdout	Notes
<b>AXE/MACE (DX-5, Flail-4, or Two-Handed Axe/Mace-3)</b>								
Entrenching Tool	sw+2 cut	1	0U	\$50	3	11	-4	
Kama	sw cut	1	0	\$40	2	8	-3	Sickle.
or	sw imp	1	0U	–	–	8	–	[1]
<b>BLOWPIPE (DX-6)</b>								
Blowpipe	Special	1	No	\$30	1	2†	-6	Blown powder. [2]
<b>BOXING, BRAWLING, KARATE, or DX</b>								
Punch	thr-1 cr	C	0	–	–	–	–	[3]
Brass Knuckles	thr cr	C	0	\$10	0.25	–	-1	[3]
<b>BRAWLING, KARATE, or DX</b>								
Shuriken	thr-2 cut	C	0	\$3	0.1	–	0	Used to claw. [3]
Tonfa	thr cr	C	0	\$40	1.5	–	-3	Jab with end. [3]
<b>BRAWLING-2, KARATE-2, or DX-2</b>								
Kick	thr cr	C, 1	No	–	–	–	–	[3, 4]
Kick with Boots	thr+1 cr	C, 1	No	–	–	–	–	[3, 4]

## Martial-Arts Melee Weapon Table (Continued)

Weapon	Damage	Reach	Parry	Cost	Weight	ST	Holdout	Notes
<b>BROADSWORD (DX-5, Rapier-4, Saber-4, Shortsword-2, or Two-Handed Sword-4)</b>								
Cane	sw+1 cr	1	0	\$10	2.5	10	-4	
or	thr+1 cr	1	0	–	–	10	–	
Jo	sw cr	1	0	\$10	2	9	-3	Stick.
or	thr cr	1	0	–	–	9	–	
Katana	sw+1 cut	1	0	\$550	3.75	10	-5	[5]
or	thr+1 imp	1	0	–	–	10	–	
<b>FLAIL (DX-6, Axe/Mace-4, or Two-Handed Flail-3)</b>								
Nunchaku	sw+1 cr	1	0U	\$20	2	7	-2	Small flail. [6]
<b>JITTE/SAI (DX-5, Main-Gauche-4, or Shortsword-3)</b>								
Sai	sw cr	1	0	\$60	1.5	7	-3	Tined dagger. [7]
or	thr imp	1	0	–	–	7	–	
<b>KNIFE (DX-4, Main-Gauche-3, or Shortsword-3)</b>								
Commando Knife	sw-2 cut	C, 1	-1	\$40	1	6	-2	
or	thr imp	C	-1	–	–	6	–	
Kukri	sw-1 cut	C, 1	0	\$50	1.5	7	-3	
or	thr-1 imp	C	0	–	–	7	–	
<b>KUSARI (DX-6, Two-Handed Flail-4, or Whip-3)</b>								
Kusari	sw+2 cr	1-4*	-2U	\$70	5	11	-5	Weighted chain. [8]
<b>MAIN-GAUCHE (DX-5, Jitte/Sai-4, Knife-4, Rapier-3, Saber-3, or Smallsword-3)</b>								
Commando Knife	sw-2 cut	C, 1	0F	\$40	1	6	-2	
or	thr imp	C	0F	–	–	6	–	
Sai	sw cr	1	0F	\$60	1.5	7	-3	Tined dagger.
or	thr imp	1	0F	–	–	7	–	
<b>SHORTSWORD (DX-5, Broadsword-2, Jitte/Sai-3, Knife-4, Saber-4, Smallsword-4, or Tonfa-3)</b>								
Baton	sw cr	1	0	\$20	1	6	-2	
or	thr cr	1	0	–	–	6	–	
Butterfly Sword	sw cut	1	0	\$200	2	8	-3	
or	thr-2 imp	1	0	–	–	8	–	
Escrima Stick	sw cr	1	0	\$20	1	6	-2	
or	thr cr	1	0	–	–	6	–	
Expandable Baton	sw cr	1	0	\$60	2	6	-1	
or	thr cr	1	0	–	–	6	–	
Ninja-To	sw cut	1	0	\$400	2	8	-2	Ninja sword!
or	thr+1 imp	1	0	–	–	8	–	
Wakizashi	sw cut	1	0	\$400	2	8	-3	Shortsword. [5]
or	thr+1 imp	1	0	–	–	8	–	
<b>SMALLSWORD (DX-5, Main-Gauche-3, Rapier-3, Saber-3, or Shortsword-4)</b>								
Escrima Stick	sw cr	1	0F	\$20	1	6	-2	
or	thr cr	1	0F	–	–	6	–	
Sword Cane	thr+1 imp	1	0F	\$600	2.5	6	-4	[5, 9]
<b>SPEAR (DX-5, Polearm-4, or Staff-2)</b>								
Bayonet	thr+3 imp	1	0	\$40	1	9†	-2	[10]
<b>STAFF (DX-5, Polearm-4, or Spear-2)</b>								
Bo	sw+2 cr	1, 2	+2	\$10	4	7†	-6	Quarterstaff.
or	thr+2 cr	1, 2	+2	–	–	7†	–	
Jo	sw+1 cr	1	+2	\$10	2	6†	-3	Stick.
or	thr+1 cr	1	+2	–	–	6†	–	

## Martial-Arts Melee Weapon Table (Continued)

Weapon	Damage	Reach	Parry	Cost	Weight	ST	Holdout	Notes
<b>TONFA (DX-5 or Shortsword-3)</b>								
Tonfa	sw cr	1	0	\$40	1.5	7	-3	[11]
or	thr cr	C, 1	0	–	–	7	–	

## TWO-HANDED FLAIL (DX-6, Flail-3, Kusari-4, or Two-Handed Axe/Mace-4)

Three-Part Staff	sw+3 cr	1-3	0U	\$60	5	11†	-6	[12]
or	sw+1 cr	1	0U	–	–	11†	–	[12]

## TWO-HANDED SWORD (DX-5 or Broadsword-4)

Bo	sw+2 cr	1, 2	0	\$10	4	9†	-6	Quarterstaff.
or	thr+1 cr	2	0	–	–	9†	–	
Jo	sw+1 cr	1	0	\$10	2	8†	-3	Stick.
or	thr+1 cr	1	0	–	–	8†	–	
Katana	sw+2 cut	1	0	\$550	3.75	9†	-5	[5]
or	thr+1 imp	1	0	–	–	9†	–	

### Notes

- [1] May get *stuck* if swung to impale. See *Picks* (p. B405).  
 [2] Suitable irritants are free, weigh 0.05 lb. per shot, and take 2 seconds to load. Target the face at -3, not the usual -5. A successful hit blinds a victim without goggles or glasses for 1d seconds.  
 [3] Receives damage bonuses for the listed unarmed skills.  
 [4] If you miss with a kick, roll vs. DX to avoid falling.  
 [5] Empty sheath doubles as baton.  
 [6] Attempts to parry a nunchaku are at just -2 (not -4).  
 [7] Gets +2 to disarm when wielded with Jitte/Sai skill; see pp. B208, B401.

[8] Attempts to parry a kusari are at -4. Uses special entangling rules; see p. B406.

[9] Counts as *disguised* at no extra charge.

[10] Stats for *fixed* bayonet, which adds -1 to gun Bulk. By itself, it's a commando knife.

[11] Use Brawling or Karate parry if better than weapon parry.

[12] Attempts to parry a three-part staff are at -4. Can make a Dual-Weapon Attack with both ends; use the second stats line.

## Martial-Arts Ranged Weapon Table

Weapon	Damage	Acc	Range	Weight	RoF	Shots	Cost	ST	Bulk	Notes
<b>BLOWPIPE (DX-6)</b>										
Blowpipe	1d-3 pi-	1	×4	1/0.05	1	1(2)	\$30	2	-6	[1]

## THROWN WEAPON (KNIFE) (DX-4)

Commando Knife	thr imp	0	×0.8/×1.5	1	1	T(1)	\$40	6	-2	
Large Throwing Knife	thr imp	1	×1/×2	1	1	T(1)	\$40	6	-1	[2]
Sai	thr imp	0	×0.8/×1.5	1.5	1	T(1)	\$60	7	-3	
Small Throwing Knife	thr-1 imp	1	×0.8/×1.5	0.5	1	T(1)	\$30	5	0	[2]

## THROWN WEAPON (SHURIKEN) (DX-4 or Throwing-2)

Spike Shuriken	thr-2 imp	1	×0.5/×1	0.1	1	T(1)	\$3	5	0	
Star Shuriken	thr-1 cut	1	×0.5/×1	0.1	1	T(1)	\$3	5	0	

### Notes

- [1] Blowpipe requires *two* hands to ready but only *one* to attack. A dart costs \$0.1.  
 [2] Not balanced for melee! Treat a small throwing knife as a small knife and a large one as a large knife, but with -2 to skill and thus an *extra* -1 to Parry.

## Poison

Poison isn't very heroic, but ninjas use it – especially on darts and shuriken. Below are two nameless, cinematic toxins for **Action** campaigns. Whether ancient ninja secrets or high-tech nerve agents, these work *instantly* and in tiny doses. Repeated doses have full effect.

**Deadly Poison:** The victim must roll HT-6 on being injected. Failure means 2d toxic damage. Critical failure (for a typical HT 10 mook rolling against 4, that's 14+) means the victim is paralyzed and helpless *regardless* of damage. \$20/dose.

**Knockout Poison:** The target must roll HT-6 on being injected. Failure means 3d fatigue damage. The GM can assume that ordinary mooks simply pass out. \$20/dose.

# CHAPTER FOUR

# COMBAT RULES

Here are some more options to accompany the rules on pp. 31-39 of *Exploits*. A few of these specifically work only for heroes who have the Trained by a Master or Weapon Master advantage.

## Acrobatic Stand

This move, explained on p. 37 of *Exploits*, is a favorite of martial artists. It lets them regain their feet quickly without sacrificing defense. At the GM's option, it's possible to forgo defense to make this trick more likely to succeed. This gives +4 to the roll but deprives the acrobat of active defenses.

## Acrobatics Galore

Fighters with Trained by a Master or Weapon Master can use Acrobatics to enhance *any* defense! This works like *Acrobatic Dodge* (p. B375): success on Acrobatics awards +2 to defend, while failure gives -2. However, it's also allowed on parries. Moreover, any number of dodges or parries can be acrobatic, at a cumulative -1 to the Acrobatics roll per defense after the first. When used alongside *Flashy Fighting* (*Exploits*, p. 37), the "free" Acrobatic Dodge for a stunt counts as the first use, and the penalty accrues from there.

## Bear Hugs

Big guys love this move! After using both arms to grapple the torso of an enemy who weighs no more than your BLx4, you can *squeeze*. Resolve this as an attempt to strangle (see *Choke or Strangle*, p. B370). You're at -5 in the Quick Contest for not targeting the neck, but may add Arm ST, Lifting ST, and Wrestling bonuses. Victory inflicts crushing damage equal to your margin of victory – but the torso lacks the neck's x1.5 wounding modifier. If you wish, you can crush the breath out of your victim, doing *fatigue* damage instead; state this before you begin.

## Bonk!

A unique All-Out Attack favored by martial artists is an attempt to grab two *adjacent* foes by the head and smash their skulls together. Roll against Judo, Sumo Wrestling, or Wrestling to grab each foe, at -4 for the skull plus another -4 for Dual-Weapon Attack, unless you've bought this off (see *Dual-Weapon Attack*, p. 16). If you grab both and they don't defend, roll DX, Brawling, Sumo Wrestling, or Wrestling to ram them together. They may defend as usual – and if *both* fail, you inflict thrust crushing damage on both skulls.

This attack is most often made from behind. You can afford to be "telegraphic" and get +4 to all rolls above. And since you're striking from behind, your foes *can't* defend!

## Don't Shoot!

Martial artists love *Banter* (*Exploits*, p. 39), and are *especially* fond of a third option: convincing gunmen not to shoot. This typically involves statements like "You'll only be mowing down your own guys if you fire!" when surrounded, or "See the big tanks? One stray shot and we *all* die!" in a chemical warehouse.

To do this, take a Concentrate maneuver and roll a Quick Contest: Intimidation vs. the *higher* of the enemy's IQ or Will. Victory by 5+ means he decides not to take the risk and picks an option other than shooting. If you win by 1-4, he hesitates, taking that many turns to reduce his risk (aim carefully, ready a silencer, move away from the threat, etc.) instead of attacking. If you tie or lose, he doesn't care and shoots anyway!

Unlike *Uttering Threats*, this *does* work against Indomitable or Unfazeable foes, and has no penalty in combat. You're not trying to cow someone with threats but alert him to a real danger external to both of you. Of course, this stratagem fails automatically against enemies with the On the Edge disadvantage . . .

You *can* try this without support for your claim; e.g., "If you start shooting, the cops will be here in a New York minute!" in a noisy train station, or that chemical warehouse ploy without the big tanks in sight. Before rolling the Quick Contest above you must *win* another one: Fast-Talk vs. your enemy's IQ. This doesn't take any extra time, but if you tie or lose, don't bother with Intimidation – you just lose.

A given trick ceases to work if your claim is proven false; e.g., a mook shoots the big tank and water comes out. Then, because you're liar, future deceptions of this kind are at a cumulative -1 to both Intimidation and Fast-Talk.

*Monk, you may be  
good, but you are not  
bulletproof.*

*– Strucker,  
Bulletproof Monk*

## Extra Effort in Combat

In addition to the list of options on pp. 37-38 of *Exploits*, these rules from p. B357 should be "switched on" in a campaign with martial artists:

*Flurry of Blows:* Pay 1 FP *per strike* to halve the Rapid Strike or Very Rapid Strike penalty, dropping fractions. An ordinary fighter could pay 1 FP to strike at -3/-6, or 2 FP to hit at -3/-3. A martial artist with Trained by a Master could, for instance, attempt four attacks at -9, but spend 1-4 FP to make one to four of those blows at just -4.

*Mighty Blows:* Pay 1 FP *per blow* to get the damage bonus of All-Out Attack (Strong) while retaining defenses. This normally can't be combined with All-Out Attack (Strong), but see *Focused Fury* (p. 15).

## Extra Steps

A martial artist with Trained by a Master or Weapon Master, and who has more than one melee attack thanks to Extra Attack or All-Out Attack (Double), can “trade” some of his attacks for extra steps on a one-for-one basis. He can insert these steps anywhere in his attack sequence – even amidst a Dual-Weapon Attack or a Rapid Strike (neither of which can be traded for steps) – or use them to leap away after attacking.

## Kayo

If an attacker has managed to sneak up behind someone – typically thanks to Stealth – he may attempt to use a *crushing* attack to knock out his quarry without grievous bodily harm. He must declare this before striking. Roll an attack to the head, with all the usual modifiers. On a hit, roll damage normally and subtract the DR of headgear, plus another DR 2 for the skull. Instead

of suffering injury, the victim must make a HT roll at a penalty equal to the penetrating damage (if damage is *exactly* 0 after DR, roll at full HT) or be knocked out for 15 minutes.

## Multiple Fast-Draws

Ninjas, especially, like to whip out multiple throwing weapons for *Ranged Rapid Strike* (below). Every turn, you may Fast-Draw *one* weapon per hand at no penalty (draws with the “off” hand have the usual -4). If you willingly discard or hurl a weapon – but *not* if you fail at Fast-Draw or lose a weapon on a critical miss – you may continue to make Fast-Draw attempts on your turn. Attempts with a given hand have a cumulative -2 per Fast-Draw roll after the first. Two-handed Fast-Draw attempts count against the total for *both* hands, and use the *worst* penalty accrued for either hand.

It's possible to Fast-Draw multiple, identical weapons *at once*. These must weigh less than 1 lb. Make a single roll at -2 per weapon. For the sake of future Fast-Draw rolls, this counts as one previous attempt *per weapon*.

Success and failure have their usual effects in all cases.

## Ranged Rapid Strike

Those with Weapon Master – most often ninjas – can use Rapid Strike (p. B370), including *Very Rapid Strike* (p. 25), with *thrown* weapons. Apply the usual penalties to hit, adjusted for Weapon Master: -3 for two throws, -6 for three, etc. This move *can* target multiple opponents.

## Some Bulletproof Advice

Realistically, bringing fists to a gunfight means being massacred. In an action-movie campaign, the first defense against this is the GM's common sense. If *all* the PCs are martial artists, this might be as trivial as making every fight a melee. If the squad includes gunmen, however, it's unfair to eliminate gunplay. Here are some tips for keeping martial artists alive:

- *Chases (Exploits, pp. 31-35)*. Consider running encounters between gun-waving mooks and martial artists as chases. High-skill heroes will easily win the Quick Contest of Chase Rolls and control the range. Reducing range to Close neutralizes the guns' range advantage and allows Move and Attack maneuvers to deliver melee attacks – which cause no Chase Roll penalties with Trained by a Master or Weapon Master! Widening the gap gives mooks insurmountable range penalties and lets martial artists flee via Hide (the ninja's standby), Stunt Escape (the traceur's), or dashing beyond Extreme range.

- *Sneaky Fighting (Exploits, p. 37)*. If a pitched battle is unavoidable, martial artists should attempt *Death from the Shadows* at the outset. Success means a close-range surprise attack on a mook gunman! A beleaguered martial artist who reaches concealment can try Disappear (p. 16) to escape.

- *Banter (Exploits, p. 39)*. Cunning heroes may be able to play mind games. Martial artists might drive off better-armed foes through *Uttering Threats*, while teammates with guns can take the heat off via *Drawing Aggression*. See *Don't Shoot!* (p. 23) for a third option.

- *Tumbling (Exploits, p. 37)*. In a battle where deception fails, this rule lets a martial artist skilled at Acrobatics give gun-toting enemies -2 to hit as he closes to melee range, while he enjoys +2 to Dodge. With *Acrobatics Galore* (p. 23), this bonus can thwart *many* foes.

- *Dodge!* Don't forget that **GURPS** allows a Dodge roll against bullets. Martial artists can exploit this by raising Dodge via Combat Reflexes, Enhanced Dodge, or higher Basic Speed. They can get +2 more from Acrobatic Dodge (p. B375) – more than once, with *Acrobatics Galore*. And they can claim +3 from *Dodge and Drop* (p. B377), using Acrobatic Stand (p. 16) to spring up in time to do it again.

- *Extra Effort Rules (Exploits, pp. 37-38)*. Most martial artists have many FP to spend on Feverish Defense to dodge gunfire (another Dodge bonus!) and Heroic Charge to run down gunmen.

- *Cinematic Combat Rules (Exploits, p. 38)*. Even the GM who doesn't allow every cinematic option should consider permitting *Bulletproof Nudity*, *Cinematic Explosions*, *Gun Control Law*, *Melee Etiquette*, *Mook Marksmanship*, *TV Action Violence*, and/or *Unarmed Etiquette* – and offensive use of *Flawless Firearms* – when heroes with Trained by a Master or Weapon Master face guns.

- *It's Better to Be Lucky (Exploits, p. 41)*. The GM should remind players of martial artists that they can “push their luck” or buy success to survive a mook firing squad. Every PC starts with Luck and should consider saving points gained from quirks for lucky breaks.



The martial artist can carry up to four small (less than 1 lb.) weapons in hand, ready for *throwing* but not *melee*. He can carefully ready these with a Ready maneuver apiece, or Fast-Draw them all in one pull at -2 per weapon; see *Multiple Fast-Draws* (p. 24). Alternatively, he can carry just one weapon ready for throwing *and* melee, chuck it, Fast-Draw the next, throw it, and so on, at -2 per Fast-Draw after the first. Either way, a failed Fast-Draw roll ends his turn.

The martial artist must declare how many throws he plans to try before he starts. Use the Rapid Strike penalty for the number of attacks *planned* – even if a failed Fast-Draw or a critical miss cuts things short.

### *Techniques as New Options*

Anyone who knows the prerequisite skill for one of the techniques on pp. 16-19 may attempt it at its lowest, 0-point level. These techniques double as new stunts and athletic feats for anybody with the right skills!

### *Very Rapid Strike*

Heroes with Trained by a Master or Weapon Master may make more than two attacks with a Rapid Strike (p. B370) or a Ranged Rapid Strike (pp. 24-25). The skill penalty is -3 per attack after the first, *already* halved for Trained by a Master or

Weapon Master: -3 for two attacks, -6 for three, -9 for four, and so on. This applies to *all* attacks; it doesn't rise gradually. For instance, three attacks would all be at -6. The only limit on number of attacks is that skill, adjusted for Very Rapid Strike, can't drop below 12; e.g., one would need at least skill 18 to attempt those three attacks at -6.

### **GURPS Martial Arts**

Gamers who enjoy what *Furious Fists* adds to their *Action* campaign will find **GURPS Martial Arts** valuable. The numerous abilities, rules, and weapons there are a boon to players seeking to individualize PCs, and to GMs looking to crank up the thrills with novel opponents and tactical situations. Switching on too many options can slow things to a crawl, though. To avoid this, the GM should review the rules recommendations of *Cinematic Combat* (*Martial Arts*, pp. 125-126), *Borderline Realism* (*Martial Arts*, pp. 237-238), and *Larger-than-Life* (*Martial Arts*, p. 239), and consider enforcing the measures suggested in *Faster Combat* (*Martial Arts*, p. 126).

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*We tried to stop her by hitting her fists  
and feet with our faces, but . . .*

*— Charles Gunn, Angel #3.7*